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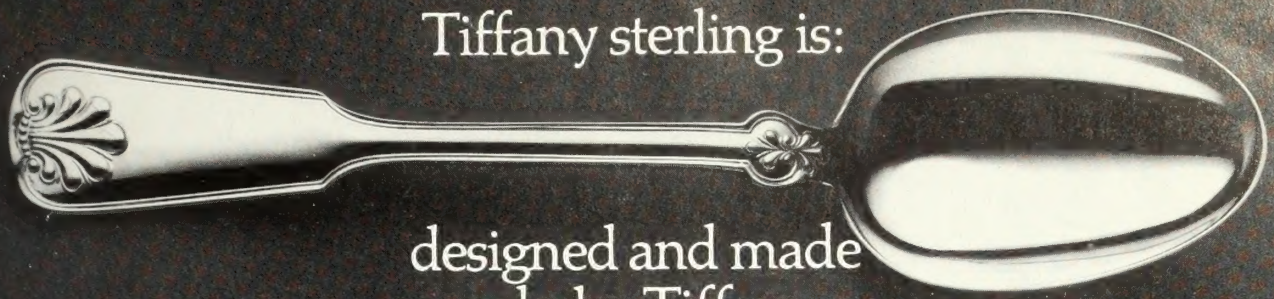
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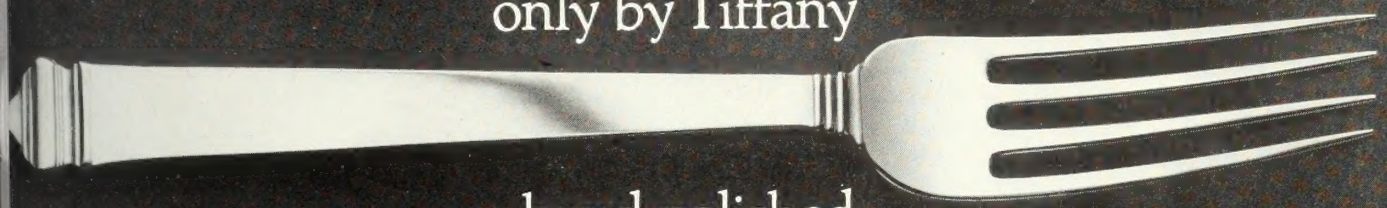
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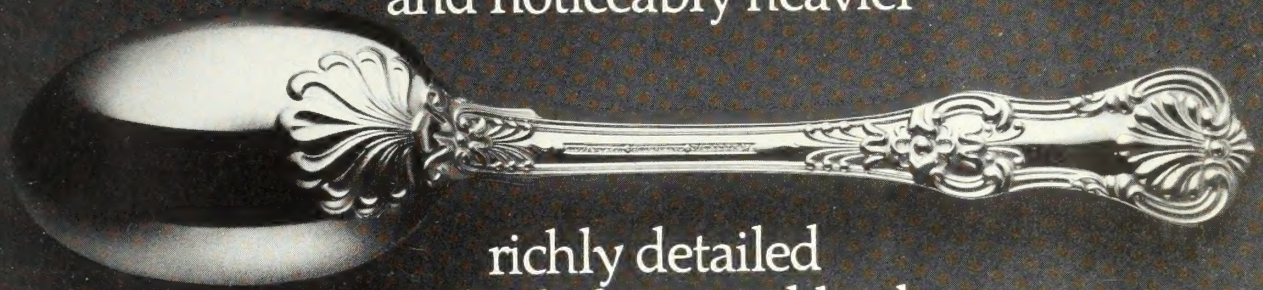
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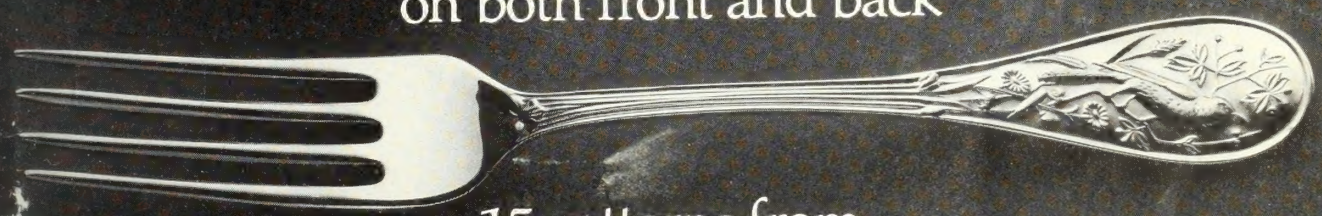
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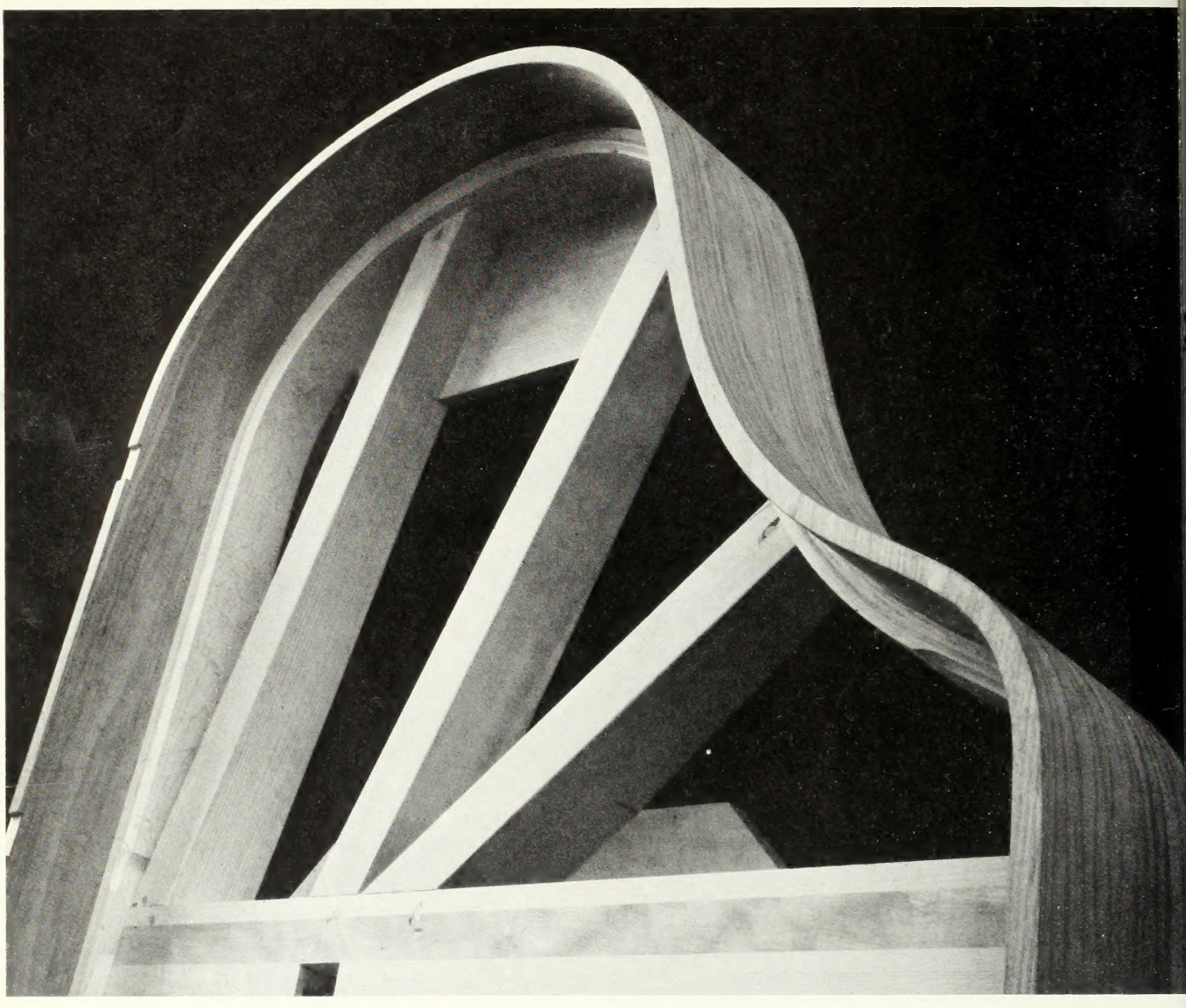
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THE MAGAZINE OF
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Photograph by John Vaughan

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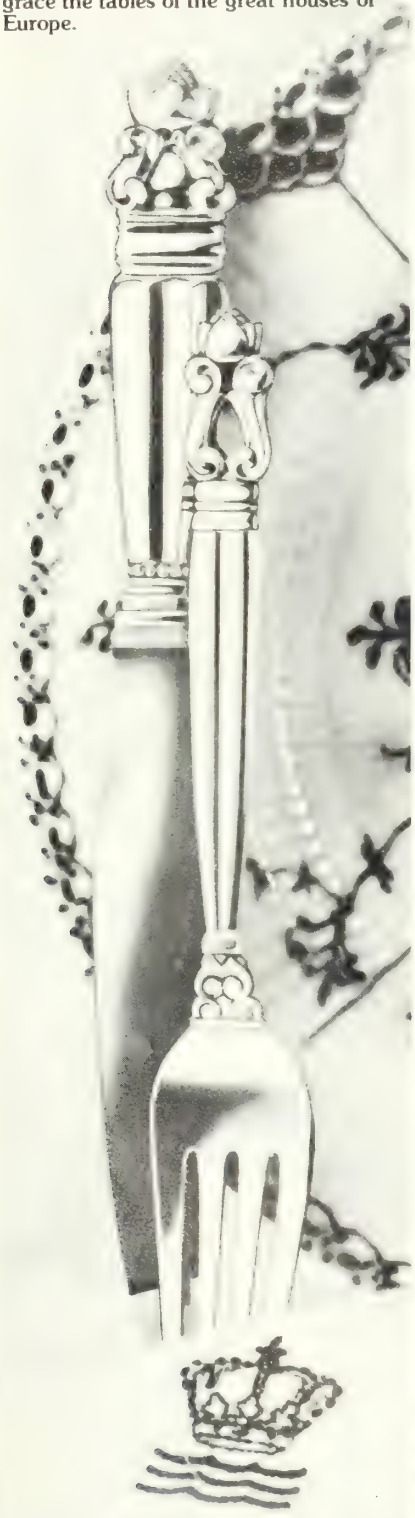
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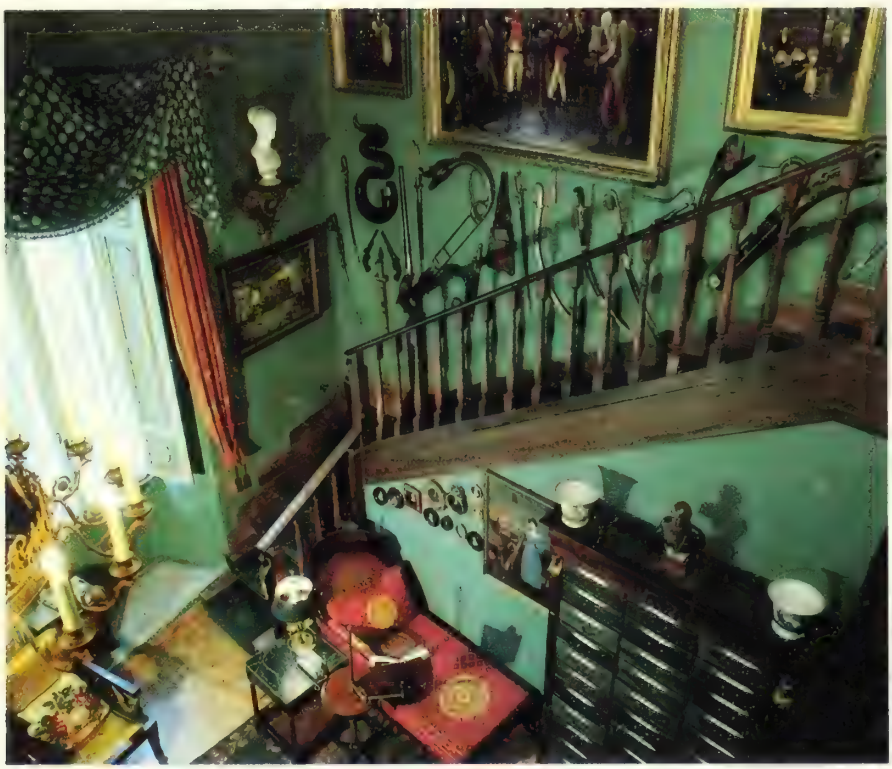
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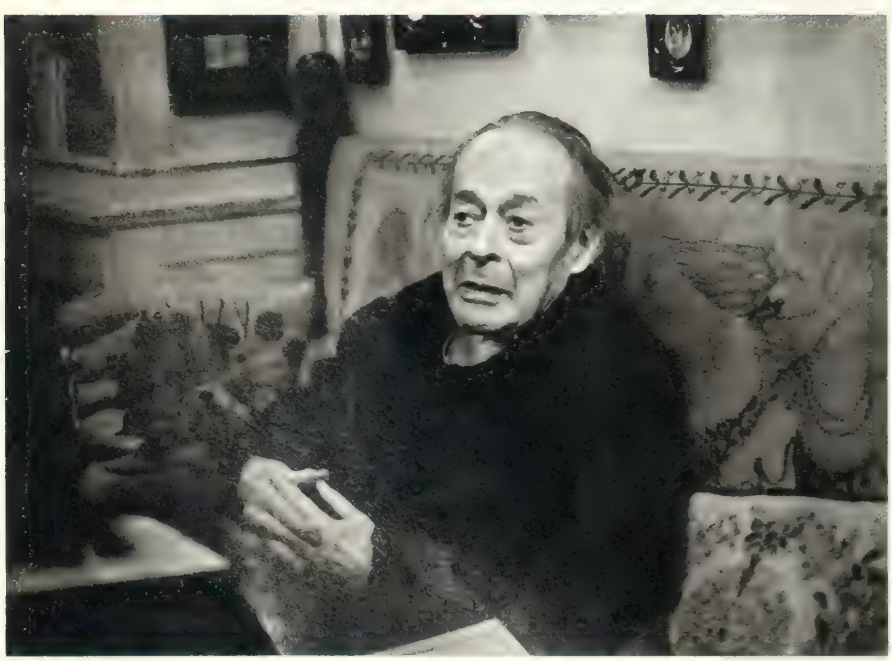
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THE OBSESSIONS OF MARIO PRAZ

The eccentric scholar who has become a design-world cult figure

By John Richardson





Top: Part of Mario Praz's collection of the unexpected in Palazzo Primoli. *Above:* One of the last portraits of Praz, taken in 1981.

Mario Praz—why are so many people invoking this eerie-sounding name? Why all this fuss over a learned Florentine aesthete who began his academic career teaching Italian at an English university and ended it teaching English at an Italian university; a haunted connoisseur whose bibelot-filled apartment in the gloomy Palazzo Ricci—later in the more cheerful Palazzo Primoli—has been likened to a "superb sepulchre"?

The answer is that Praz was the author of the celebrated *History of Furnishing,* which has recently been reprinted under the new title *An Illustrated History of Decorating.* And about time, too: friends have stolen three successive copies of this indispensable book from me since it first appeared in 1964. Don't be put off by the subtitle, which claims to cover the subject from Pompeii to 1900. Far from plodding conscientiously through the centuries, Praz picks and chooses and ultimately bogs down—to the delight of readers like myself who share this taste—in his special field of interest, Neoclassicism, especially in its Empire and Biedermeier, rather than its Louis XVI or Adam, manifestations.

Not the least of Praz's achievements was to eschew photographs and confine his illustrations—all 400 of them—to paintings and watercolors of the period, mostly by minor artists or amateurs. This device enables us to see the decoration of the past through the eyes of the past. Once and for all Praz establishes that the Neoclassical style was incomparably colorful, elegant, and fantastical yet architecturally adaptable. Now that white on white is giving way to bright color, and the elaborately upholstered bornes and banquettes of the First and Second Empires are emerging from attics and challenging Mies's "Barcelona" chairs as status symbols, Praz's absorbing book has a great deal to teach us.

But, first, a *(Continued on page 10)*



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(Continued from page 8) word abou
the author. In his life as in his tast
Praz belonged more to the 19th tha
the 20th century. Balzac's obsesse
collector, cousin Pons, leaps to mind
However, Praz is closer in spirit to th
weird inventors of E.T.A. Hoffmann
tales—Doctor Coppelius, for in
stance—whole vainglorious attempt
to raise science to the level of magic a
ways end in disaster. It is no coinc
dence that, like Hoffmann and hi
shock-headed warlocks, Praz had
special predilection for the austerel



A corner of Mario Praz's library in Palazzo Primoli.

stylish interiors of the Biedermeier pe
riod.

Again, just like a character out of
Hoffmann, Praz was credited with
having *malocchio,* the evil eye—a fate
as abhorent as leprosy, for it meant that
this *jettatore* of genius was shunned by
a great many people who should have
known better. And although Praz has
been dead for almost a year, many of
his compatriots—and not just superstitious old fogies, either—still refer to
the professor by his initials and then
only if the requisite amulets are within
reach.

This ostracism was the sadder, for
there is far more evidence of Praz's
charm and benevolence than there is of
his malefic powers. True, he is said to
have caused a large Empire vase to ex-
plode by giving it a covetous or per-
haps disparaging look, and to have
brought an immense chandelier crash-
ing down on the heads of some friends
merely by (Continued on page 12)



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(Continued from page 10) entering a Roman drawing room (the culprit was of course immune from harm). But these stories are only to be taken seriously insofar as they justified social witch-hunters in treating poor Praz as a pariah. Small wonder that the inanimate came to take precedence over the animate in his affections, that his only love-objects were objects.

Small wonder, too, that Praz ultimately carried his passion for furniture and decoration to the point of fetishism. And just as fetishists direct their passions toward a specific thing or part of a body rather than the loved one, so Praz developed passions for such diverse objects as wax portraits, military knickknacks, silhouettes, framed fans, pelmet poles, above all small paintings of domestic interiors with figures. Again, in true fetish fashion, the objects of Praz's desire had to conform to a very specific style—the Empire style in all its severity. Hence the panoply of eagles, swans, sphinxes, and ormolu bees that made his apartment resemble Scarpia's chambers in the Farnese Palace in *Tosca*. In the end this sublimation had its own reward. By the time he died, Praz had formed a far richer collection of Empire art and artifacts than Rome's other repository of this style, the Museo Napoleonico, above which—no coincidence—he ended his unhappy days.

Some 50 years earlier, when he was teaching in the north of England, Praz had married a brave young woman called Vivien, who hailed from the Brighton area, and who "at first encouraged [his] mania." But after 10 years with a husband who found it easier to relate to an Empire bed than its occupant, Vivien ran away, it is said, with a curator from the Vatican Museum; and piling insult on injury, she wrote a *roman à clef* about her former husband, accusing him of leading "a dead life"—a euphemism, one suspects, for something more dire.

Partly as a rejoinder to his wife's charges, Praz entitled his autobiography *The House of Life* (1958). Trust the author to conceive this in the form of decoration: *The House of Life* consists of a detailed description of Praz's apartment and collections. All the same the memoir belies its title. Far from being a life-giving experience, Praz's house tour is like an inspection of Tutankhamen's tomb with the significance of each funerary object explained by the occupant. Claustrophobic, nonetheless fascinating.

The fates that blighted Praz's life treated his literary work no less capriciously. Possibly because of the fears that his name evoked, he was hardly regarded as a prophet in his own country. Elsewhere in Europe, however, Praz was hailed by students of 19th-century literature as a genius. And when *The Romantic Agony,* by far his most important and original book, first appeared in translation in 1933, it took the avant-garde, above all the Surrealists, by storm. And with good reason. This revolutionary and exhaustive study of the pathology of romanticism revealed the development of the Romantic tradition in an entirely new if somewhat sick light. But it is typical of Praz's luck that this pathfinding work has been eclipsed in terms of popular acclaim by the more modish reputation of his *History of Interior Decoration.* It is also typical of Praz's luck that its abundant illustrations have doomed this *History* to be one of the most looked-at but least read books of our time: a decorator's crib instead of a bible. *(Continued on page 14)*

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Bombe Desk. Massachusetts, circa 1780. This mahogany desk represents the most rare of all furniture shapes. Because of the complexity of design, only six craftsmen worked in this form, and they were all from Boston. A testament to craftsmanship, the original may be seen in Massachusetts Hall.

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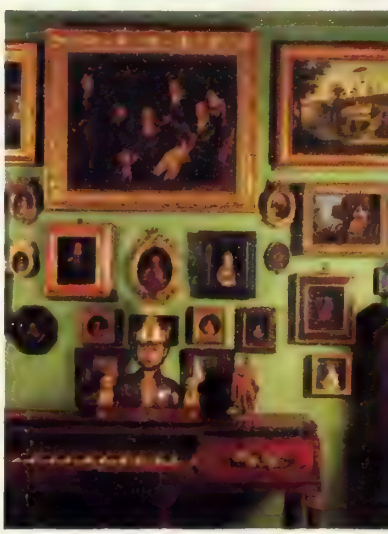
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(Continued from page 12) We ign
the text of Praz's *History* at our pe
True, his pernickety scholarship can
tedious, but he is the only contemp
rary writer to have evolved a philo
phy of decoration—a philosophy t
boils down to the concept that "
house is the man" (as opposed to "
style is the man"):

"The ultimate meaning of a harmo
ously decorated house is . . . to mir
man, but to mirror him in his ideal
ing; it is an exaltation of the self."

Granted, this concept has little re
vance to the decoration of high-r
condominiums. Still, designers cou
do worse than take Praz's idealis
words to heart. They should also b
in mind the interiors Praz extols w
the work of the lady or gentleman
the house in collaboration with an
chitect and various artisans—never
a decorator whose day, despite the n
title of Praz's *History,* was yet to con



Figurines, wax portraits, miniatures, and a family painting by Desormais above an Erard piano in the study.

Then again, who but Praz provid
such recondite yet useful informati
as this description of the enchanti
but totally forgotten *Zimmerlaube*
aristocratic ancestor of the room-d
vider?

". . . a fashion of the Biedermeier pe
od which was employed by Schinkel
all the apartments which he designe
for feminine royalty. [It] consisted o
row of poles or lances (generally of
der wood, stained dark and polishe
set in a green tin flower box base fro
which ivy or *(Continued on page 2*


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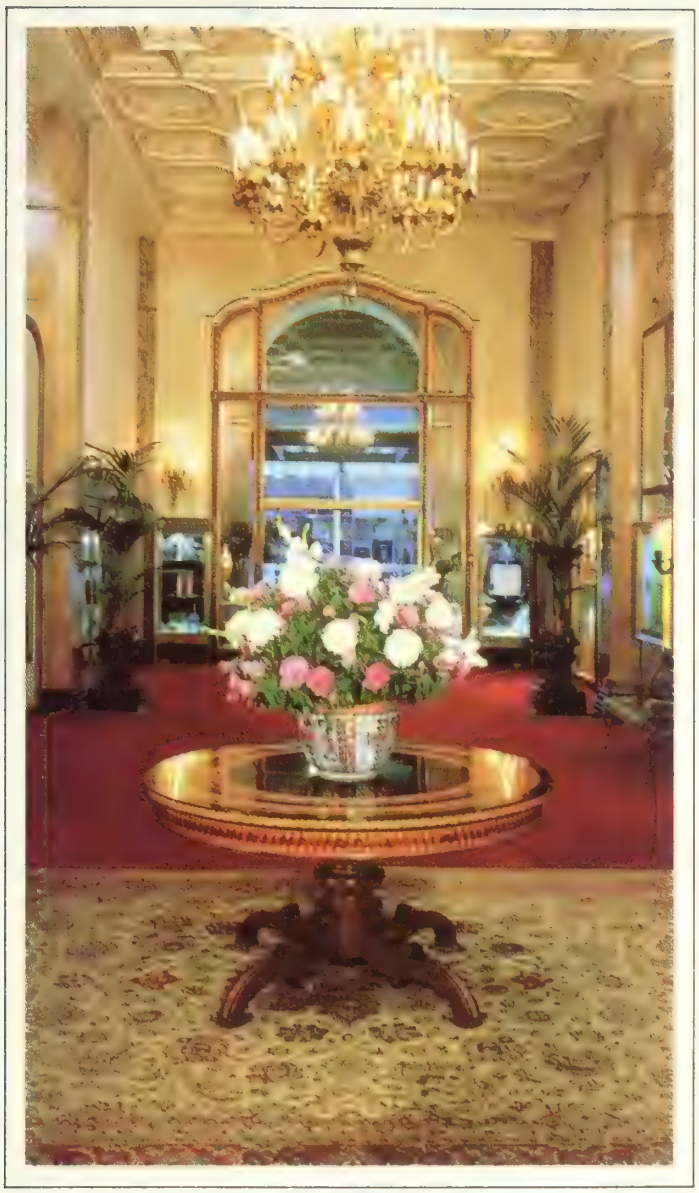
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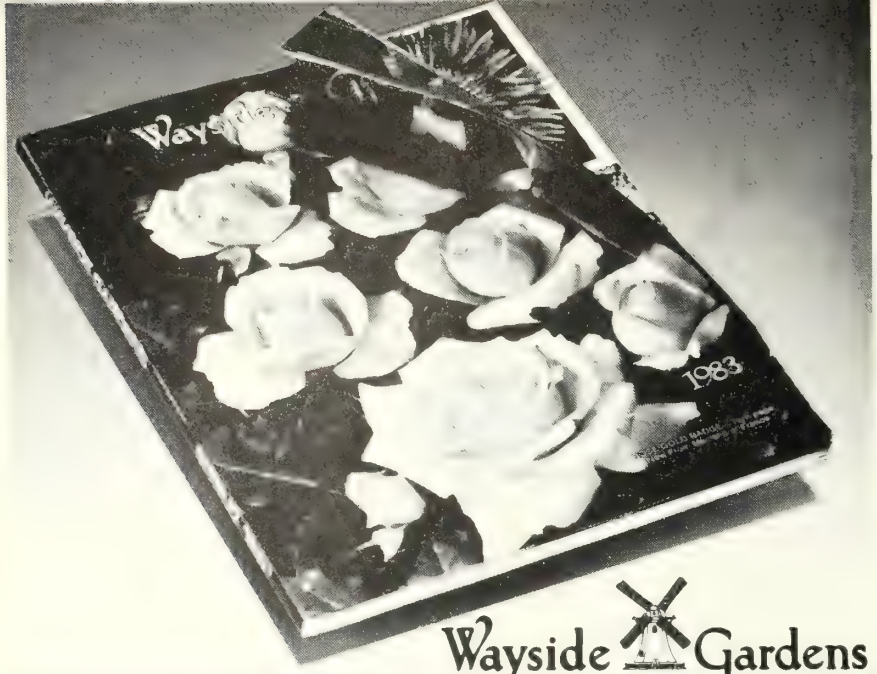


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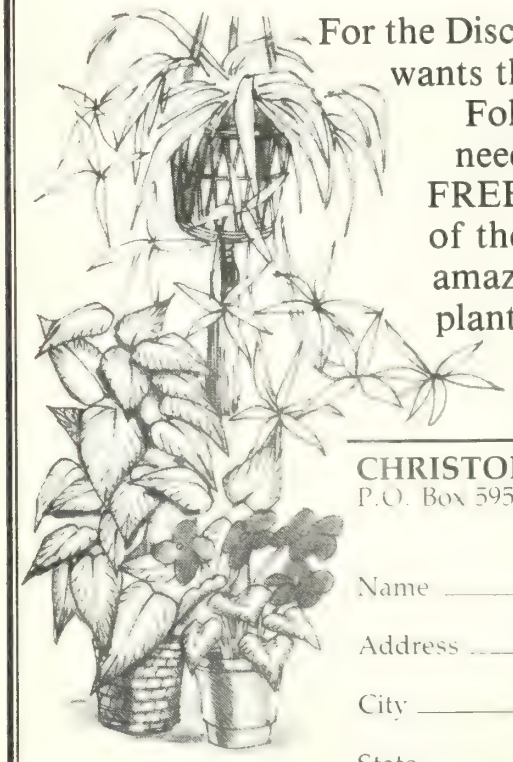
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(Continued from page 14) other trailin plants grew, their tendrils curlin around the poles. . . . Generally thes domestic arbours were in front of . windows but if the room had two cer tral columns . . . the arbours were set i the spaces between the columns . [thus] a small apartment was create inside the larger, a fanciful corne where the lady of the house coul write."

Since Praz wrote his *History* in th shadow of World War II, it is sho through with despair at the ravage suffered by European buildings Hence the nostalgic light in which h bathes everything and his imprecation against Baedeker bombing. For bette or worse the depredations of wa blinded Praz to even greater depreda tions behind the Iron Curtain cause by totalitarian decree and elsewhere, i Europe, by economic circumstances.

Nor does he sufficiently assess th damage perpetrated by changes i fashion—for instance, by Syri Maugham who pickled pieces of gilde or veneered furniture with the indis criminate enthusiasm of a housewife a harvest time. What she could not pick le, Mrs. Maugham painted off-white thereby doing almost as much damag to antiques as the firebombs that fell o Bath. Be that as it may, Praz saw the de velopment of decoration in terms of "a constant flux and reflux"— a reflux i which he played a crucial role. □



ADAM BARTOS

JOHN RICHARDSON

John Richardson will write Commentary every other month. He is the author of books on Manet and Braque and is currently at work on a biography of Picasso.



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ENID A. HAUPT

The woman who puts flowers in their place

By Caroline Seebohm



The Enid A. Haupt Conservatory of the New York Botanical Garden—horticulture's crown jewel

Orchids were the start of it all. "When I was 12 years old," Enid Annenberg Haupt recalls, seated in her art- and flower-filled New York apartment, "I went to visit a friend's house in Milwaukee, where I grew up. Her mother was seated in a garden room, and nearby was a pot of flowers—two big blooms in purple, unlike anything I had ever seen. 'What is that?' I asked. 'You may never see another one,' said my friend's mother. 'That is an orchid, and it comes from South America.' "

So Enid Annenberg became an orchid person early on, soon extending the interest to all things horticultural. Eventually she began to win prizes with her flowers, and to make a name for herself in the annals of orchid-growing (Cymbidium Enid Haupt, for example). Her marriage to stockbroker Ira Haupt only doubled the passion. "My husband knew the genetic strains, the biological aspects," she explains. "I could tell the quality of a flower from across a room, and I did all the arranging."

Orchids may have been the Haupt specialty, but flowering plants in pots became her trademark. (She has always chosen pots over cut flowers: "Flowers indoors lose most everything without the earthiness of pot and foliage.") While Lady Bird Johnson was raising the public consciousness by planting America's outdoors, Enid Annenberg Haupt was busy bringing the garden indoors. By the late '60s nobody visiting her homes in New Jersey or Florida could fail to remark on the color and profusion of the flowering plants that filled every room. Orchids, chrysanthemums, geraniums, cyclamen, impatiens, myrtle, fuchsia, petunias, calceolarias, tuberous begonias, cactus, iris, gloxinia, and then more orchids—in groups, by themselves, up the stairs, under tables. It was a movable feast, and a revolution in interior design.



Portrait of Mrs. Haupt with art and flowers by Gerald Van der Kemp.

Not only were they beautiful in themselves, but also they played an integral part in the design of each room. For Enid Haupt loves art as well as flowers, and her paintings, sculpture, and furnishings are all harmoniously combined. A blue-mauve orchid (Vanda Rothschildiana), for instance, will inspire the color of a chair fabric; a blue iris reflects the French sky in a Renoir canvas; plants with rounded shapes such as geraniums or begonias are juxtaposed with an angular Giacometti sculpture; a collection of porcelain vegetables on a console seems to spill out of the Matisse painting above.

Her plants change with the seasons, transforming a room—in autumn, a mass of white flowers such as cyclamen and topiary chrysanthemums; in spring, yellow and orange tulips and golden calceolaria. She constantly adapts and refines, hence her decision not to use azaleas any more indoors since their *(Continued on page 26)*

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(Continued from page 26) for the $1 million restoration and endowment.

Money allied with application Enid Haupt's caliber make a rare ar powerful combination. Her influen can be seen in almost any horticultur enterprise in America. "Enid's g such an alive personality," says Brook Astor, another heroic toiler in the ph anthropic vineyard. "Whatever s does she does with enormous vitalit Yet she's very modest, never puts he self on show. And of course she's a ve hard worker."

"I admire dedication most of all Mrs. Haupt admits. "I don't think an thing much happens without it." An with that she steps out to a board mee ing of the Britain Salutes New Yo 1983 cultural festival, for which she organizing a month-long horticultur exhibit with an English theme in h conservatory at the New York Botan cal Garden, to tie in with London Chelsea Flower Show this spring.

Yet the gift perhaps most characte istic of the donor, and the one she tre sures the most, is one of the lea heralded. It is the Enid A. Haupt Glas Garden, a greenhouse she planned as playground for sick children at D Howard Rusk's Institute of Rehabilit tion Medicine at New York Universit Medical Center. "I'll make them complete world," she promised, an she did. A solarium, cutting garde talking birds, pond, fruit trees, mu sic—the garden opened in 1959, phys cal therapy through horticulture, breakthrough in medical care no practiced everywhere, for children an adults alike. The doctors instantl dubbed it "The Garden of Enid."

Few of the patients who find suc pleasure working with the plants an flowers in this garden know that on woman donated the structure, staf and supply costs. But in a sense it is th logical outcome of her career. She onc said that if she had to choose betwee her paintings and her flowers, sh would choose her flowers. "Gardenin is therapy for all of us," she says "When you garden, you feel the rea power of nature, and your link wit something permanent and real. I get thrill when they announce that th space launch will take place *if weathe permits*. It means the divine spirit i still in charge. We still have the tides the sun, the stars." □

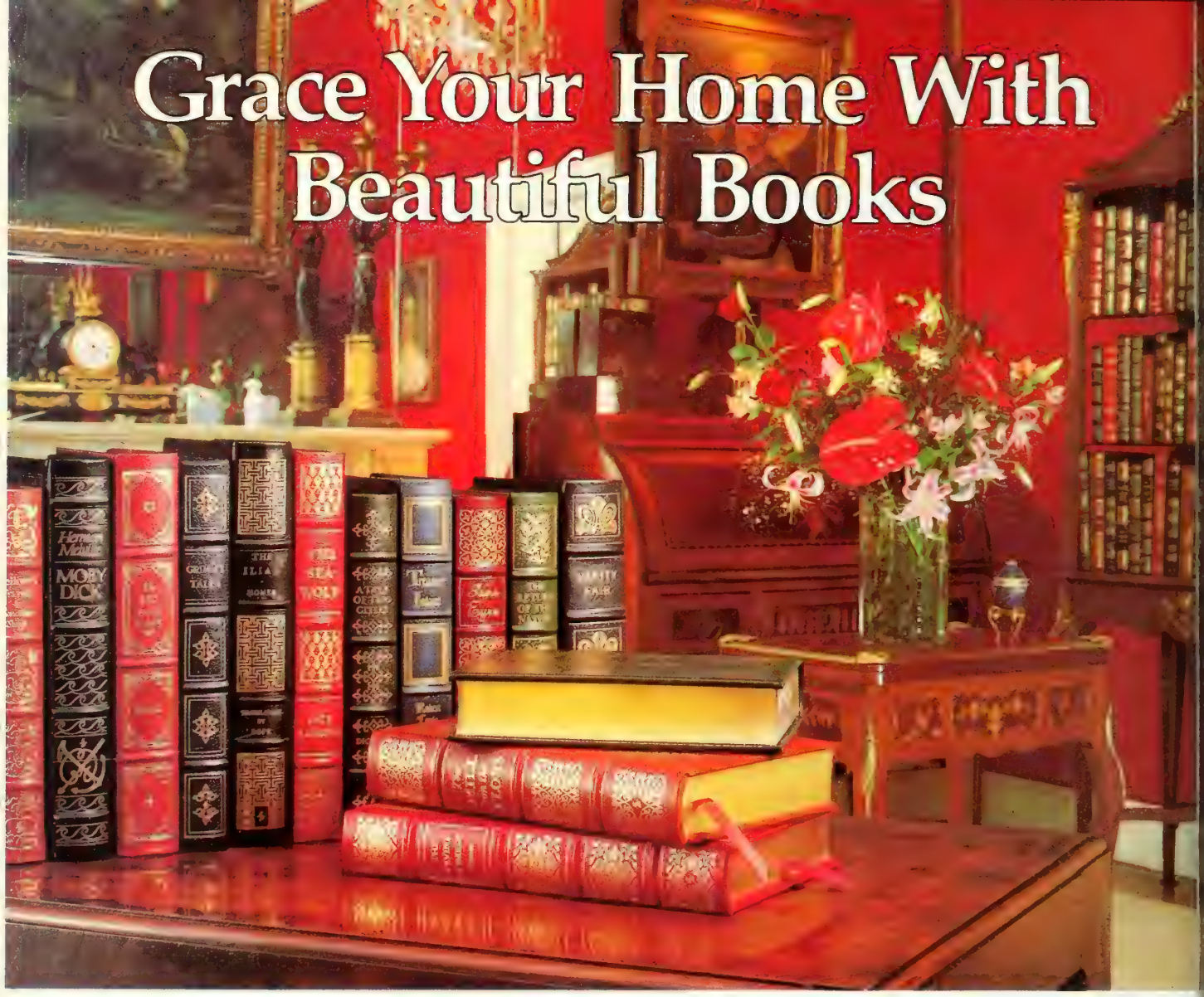


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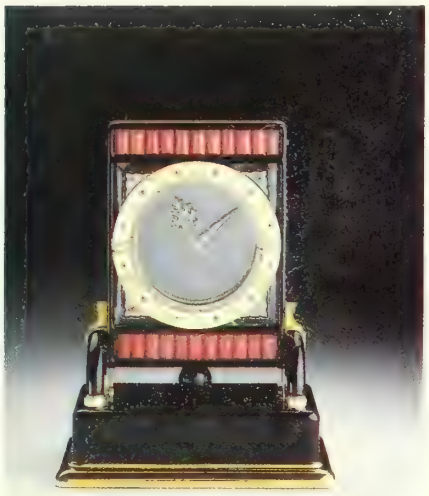
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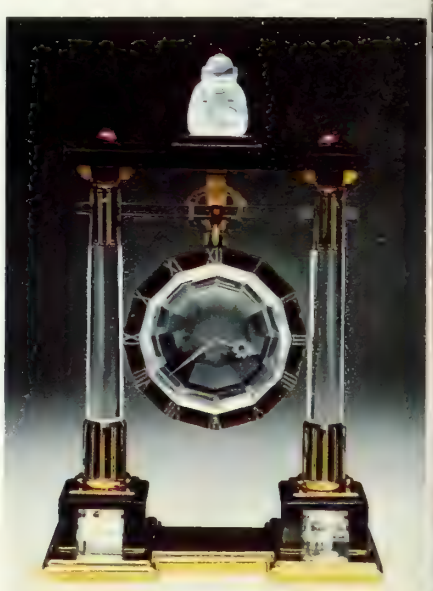
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ART DECO AND THE BEAUTIFUL OBJECT

Cartier at the Los Angeles County Museum

By Vivienne Becker

Perhaps it was a dream that made Pierre Cartier, craftsman of powder flasks and rifle butts, introduce his son to the art of the goldsmith, but the Cartier family has been dealing in fantasy ever since. When Louis-François founded the first Cartier workshop back in 1847, his imaginative talent attracted a clientele that has continued to be drawn by Cartier's creations up to the present day.

The exhibition of Cartier Art Deco treasures on through February 13 at the Los Angeles County Museum is appropriately being held in a city that is still redolent of the 1920s and '30s and evokes the mystique and opulence of Hollywood, which itself became a symbol of the Art Deco style. Like Hollywood, Cartier surprised the world and made the '20s roar. Never before had such untempered luxury, craftsmanship, and design been expressed in jewels, timepieces, and bagatelles. Louis Cartier's flights of fantasy captured the imagination of the audience at the 1925 Paris Exposition—the show that launched Art Deco. He dared to use the most precious gems in avant-garde designs and for the most frivolous personal accessories. Until this time diamond jewelry had been rather inhibited by tradition and the value of the materials. Indeed, years of watching over the workbench did not dull Louis's senses. A good intuition and background in the arts enabled him to absorb all the important sources of Art Deco.



Left to right: Pierre, Louis, Alfred, and Jacques Cartier in 1922. *Above left:* A black onyx, coral, and diamond Mystery Clock made in Paris about 1924. *Center:* A 1920 platinum, onyx, and diamond pendant with five cabochon Kashmir sapphires. *Above right:* A rock crystal Mystery Clock made in Paris in 1924 on a black onyx, gold, crystal, and enamel base supports a crystal Billiken.

The French Industrial Revolution of the 1870s and '80s had created great interest in machines and continued to be one of the major influences on design in the 1920s. Mechanical feats of engineering were akin to magic and found their way from industry to jewelry where they turned up either as ingeniously contrived clasps, hinges, and goldwork, or outwardly as an element of design. *(Continued on page 36)*


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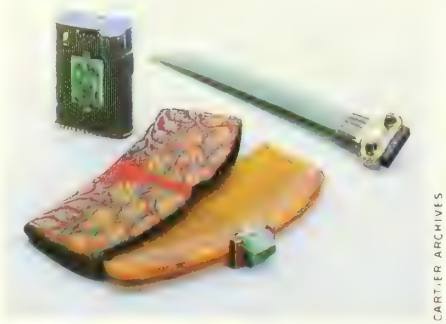
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(Continued from page 34) Other powerful influences were at work on the age: the well-known introduction of vibrant colors in the sets and costumes of the Ballets Russes, exoticism from the East, the treasures of Tutankhamen, negro art, cubism, cars, ships and planes, and everywhere a contrived unreality of formalized motifs.

Louis's most significant contribution was his revival of the tradition of watch- and clock-making. The technology of timepieces fascinated him, and at the same time, provided suitable vehicles for his decorative fantasies. For several years, Cartier researched precious metals and materials, different combinations of both, and mechanisms, before he developed his idea of a magical clock never attempted before: "La Pendule Mystérieuse," or Mystery Clock. The clock- and watchmaking soon became the most sought-after aspect of Cartier's activities. He created the first wristwatch of the age in 1904 for the Brazilian aeronautics pioneer, Alberto Santos-Dumont. In the manner of a latter-day Fabergé, Louis Cartier produced the first exotic clocks for the royal families of France, Greece, and England.



CARTIER ARCHIVES

Above: A striped blue enamel and gold lighter from 1930; a rough-cut emerald set in black enamel with gold, cabochon rubies, and diamonds decorates this 1928 comb; a nephrite and gold 1913 letter opener with black enamel, onyx, and cabochon sapphires.

The famous mystery clocks came to answer the contemporary search for the rare and beautiful, for the mythical and theatrical. It is interesting that the obsession with mechanical devices manifested itself as a clock that had no visible means of working. Two diamond-set hands appeared to be floating in mid-air, moving magically around a face of transparent rock crystal. The mechanism was moved from its usual place and hidden in the base or columns or any substantial support. The dial was made of two slices or "plates" of rock crystal with one hand fixed to each disk of crystal. The cog mechanism then moved the two parallel slices, which in turn rotated the hands. It was the brilliant work of an illusionist. Mystery clocks were always very grand and impressive affairs, incorporating the romance of exoticism and precious minerals with the simplicity of the rock crystal face. The clocks were imbued with exotic cult mystery, based strongly on the Imperial Chinese tradition. Black, white, or azure blue enamels framed the face and were studded with rose diamond numerals. Pedestal bases were covered in Chinese motifs and Deco designs, or made of nephrite, with coral, turquoise, mother-of-pearl, or lapis lazuli for added exuberance, and perhaps a carved Buddha, pillars, or pyramids. One made in 1930 for an Indian prince rested on a howdah on the back of a carved turtle, the goldwork and black enamel studded with cabochon rubies, sapphires, and emeralds. Other fashionable timepieces included pendant watches to be draped on flat-chested flappers, and lapel watches that graced "les garçonnes," modern girls with cropped hair and tailored clothes.

One of the first to use a mixture of colored precious stones, Cartier also held supremacy in the realm of personal accessories, cigarette cases, étuis, handbags, powder compacts, or the fashionable minaudière; all were fashioned with varied textures and immaculate goldwork, lacquer for intense color and a hint of the East Chinoiserie scenes of carved mother-of-pearl, coral, jade, enamel, gemstones, the sensuous Sphinx atop a silk handbag, or the high-drama of pure abstract Art Deco motifs.

Cartier left its mark on the age, and collectors will continue to seek those pieces made with such style and unrivaled skill, pieces that evoked a bygone time—that last unnatural surge of life and color lost forever before the dark years of World War II. □

Vivienne Becker is a jewelry historian and the author of Antique and Twentieth Century Jewelry.

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THE UNSTATELY HOMES OF ENGLAND

By John Betjeman

Editor's note: John Betjeman celebrates the cottage in this excerpt from his introduction to English Cottages *(Viking Press) by his daughter Candida Lycett Green and photographer Tony Evans.*

My daughter is quite right when she says that people think their cottages are far older than they are, but the first cottages were no more than shelters for human bodies against the elements, and the architecture did not come in until the 18th century and then not consciously. I have seen the sole black house in these islands on the island of Foula beyond the outer Hebrides; it had no windows and the place was full of smoke from a fire lighted in the middle of the rooms. This was what early cottages were like before people improved themselves. From solidified tents to the village street and on to the pre-fab, the process is continuous. The great houses remain aloof and alone, but this book contains the ordinary houses—the cottages that we all dream of having.

In 1349 the Black Death wiped out a third of England's population and whole villages disappeared. Labor was in great demand, villagers moved further afield to offer their services or set themselves up independently, and a new class of successful farmers, merchants, and tradesmen was born. As noblemen were building great houses all over the South-East and gradually spreading North, so the new "yeoman" classes were building smaller houses, now referred to as cottages, and it is these which, together with the church, form the hearts of many of our villages today.

The years between 1550 and 1660 are sometimes described as the "Golden Age" of cottage building, but the ones built in that period were the homes of men of relative means who could afford to use lasting materials. In the past two centuries cottages were built at an ever-increasing rate. Though they look cozy and homely enough now, in his *How the Poor Live*, written in the 1880s, George R. Sims painted a terrible picture of the filth and poverty many of them witnessed:

"The room was no better and no worse than hundreds of its class. It was dirty and dilapidated, with the usual bulging blackened ceiling and the usual crumbling greasy walls. Its furniture was a dilapidated four-post bedstead, a chair, and a deal table. On the bed lay a woman, young, and with features that, before hourly anguish contorted them, had been comely. The woman was dying slowly of heart disease. Death was "writ large" upon her face. At her breast she held her *(Continued on page 46)*

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TONY EVANS

Opposite above: Rose Cottage, which was built in the 16th century, has a steep pitched roof to quickly throw off rain. *Above top:* No. 21 Sapperton, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, was built as a farmhouse in the 17th century. *Above:* This pair of streamlined whitewashed cottages is in Stinsford, Dorchester, Dorset. Stinsford is Thomas Hardy country. His heart was buried in the Stinsford church in 1928.

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(Continued from page 42) child, a poor little mite of a baby that was drawing the last drain of life from its mother's breast. The day was a bitterly cold one; through the broken casement the wind came ever and anon in icy gusts, blowing the hanging end of the ragged coverlet upon the bed to and fro like a flag in a breeze."

The cottages of model villages were built with the best intentions and were a conscious effort to provide better living conditions.

Garden suburbs are quite distinct from garden cities. Garden suburbs came first, and the pioneer Arts and Crafts garden suburb was Norman Shaw's Bedford Park, Middlesex. A ballad of the time said of these houses:

"With red and blue and sagest green
Were walls and dado dyed,
Friezes of Morris' there were seen
And Oaken wainscot wide.
Now he who loves aesthetic cheer
And does not mind the damp
May come and read Rossetti here
By a Japanese-y lamp."

Dame Henrietta Barnett was the daughter of a clergyman, who lived first in Whitechapel and then moved with her husband to Hampstead where she founded one of the first garden suburbs. She wanted to bring sunlight and nature into the lives of the poor. Every home in the suburb is so arranged that it can be seen to be as good at the back as it is at the front. In fact it was the reverse of façadism. Towns had grown straight and packed along streets, but the garden suburb brought nature in-between, fresh air from the Hampstead hills and a village atmosphere. Letchworth and Welwyn garden cities were thought of as communities with a life of their own.

Arts and Crafts cottages were the last rumble of a farm cart in an uneven country lane. The estate cottages at Buscot and Eaton Hastings in Berkshire built by the Butler-Henderson family are perfect examples. The Butler-Hendersons financed a railway company, the beginning of which was the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire line, soon known as the "MS and L" ("Money Sunk and Lost"); it then became the Great Central Railway or "GC" ("Gone Completely"). Despite losing a lot of money they built numerous stone cottages designed by Sir Ernest George. During the last war they were inhabited by Basque refugees at the invitation of Lord Faringdon and became known as the Basque Cottages. They are a lasting tribute to the influence of William Morris, lying across the Thames in Kelmscott churchyard under a stone designed by Philip Webb, whom Norman Shaw described as "a very interesting man with a strong liking for the ugly."

As early as the 1780s people who *certainly* did not need to do so were already living in cottages. Richard Payne Knight, a well-known theorist of the Picturesque movement, relinquished his large and fanciful Downton Castle in Shropshire with its marble dining room inspired by the Pantheon and its army of servants, and retired to a small cottage on his estate. He referred to it as "my little domestic del," and scorned his peers for spending their time "pent up in a bed or a dining room or . . . toiling through turnip fields and stubble in pursuit of partridges."

There was a certain smugness about those Picturesque theorists, who, though they eulogized the glories of cottage life, did not know true poverty or anything near it, and I wonder if they spent most of their time writing of sublimity from the comfort of their libraries? The writers, however, were probably the most genuine "new" cottage dwellers of that period. In the early 1800s William and Dorothy Wordsworth, and later Mary, found true happiness in their Lakeland home, Dove Cottage:

"Yes, Mary, to some lowly door
In that delicious spot obscure
Our happy feet shall tend."

Thomas de Quincey took on Dove Cottage after the Wordsworths and remained in it for 26 years, living, it seems, in comfort:

"Candles at 4 o'clock, warm hearth rugs, tea, a fair tea-maker, shutters closed, curtains flowing in ample draperies on the floor whilst the wind and the rain are raging without."

Eventually the number of his children and books became so many that he was obliged to leave for a larger house.

The vogue for the "simple life" took off and flourished over the first few decades of the 19th century. The rich began to settle in the country, especially beside the sea, in elegant cottages. In his *Life in the English Country House* (1978), Mark Girouard describes:

"The strong element of artificiality in the whole back-to-nature movement came into the open in one of its most engaging but also ridiculous products, the *cottage orné*—the simple life, lived in simple luxury in a simple cottage with—quite often—fifteen simple bedrooms, all hung with French wallpapers."

Though Regency society took the idea of the cottage far beyond its limits, the desire for a little place in the country burned fervently and more genuinely through the second half of the 19th century.

William Morris, poet, craftsman, and socialist, revived the simple life in many a middle-class heart. Colonies of "new" cottagers began to spring up all over the place, and gained momentum by the 1900s. Artists and artisans like the group at Sapperton in Gloucestershire set other shining examples. Writers, poets, and film-makers clustered round Clough Williams-Ellis's Portmeirion in North Wales in whitewashed cottages on verdant mountainsides.

In the 1920s, it became very much "the thing" to have a cottage in the country—actors and actresses had them tucked away in Kent. People put up with any discomfort provided it was the country. You could buy cottages for £200–£300 then. Nowadays the desire for a thatched half-timbered cottage dripping with honeysuckle is almost universal. Estate agents echo the advertisements in the pattern books of the 1800s:

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(How amazed Cobbett would have been to see the hovels he visited, bedecked with bathrooms and with a Jaguar parked outside.)

I would like to say how grateful I am to my daughter for sharing my pleasure in looking at buildings. The great thing is not to bore, and "one good illustration is better than ten pages of text," F. E. Howard used to say. □

Sir John Betjeman has been the poet laureate of Britain since 1972 and is the author of many books and several television programs on architecture.

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THE MAN WITH KALEIDOSCOPE EYES

From architecture to women's clothing, Adolf Loos surveyed the world with penetrating vision

By Rosemarie Haag Bletter

ADOLF LOOS
THEORY AND WORKS
by Benedetto Gravagnuolo, Rizzoli, 1982; $50.

SPOKEN INTO THE VOID
COLLECTED ESSAYS 1897–1900
by Adolf Loos, an Oppositions Book, MIT Press, 1982; $30.

"Some time ago I asked an American lady what seemed to her the most noticeable difference between Austria and America. Her answer: 'The plumbing.' " "Next to academies we should build baths. . . ." ". . . the plumber is the pioneer of cleanliness. He is the state's chief craftsman, the quartermaster of our culture. . . ." These are some of the shockingly disrespectful words of the Austrian architect Adolf Loos (1870–1933). He was an architect, a theorist, and most of all an irreverent critic of his own culture. Even today, 50 years after his death, he is still considered as something of a maverick. How can the plumber be the quartermaster of our culture? Would this not eliminate the need for the architect? Probably, but Loos (rhymes with "close") was quite serious in his admiration of utilitarian products such as plumbing. To appreciate them was to be modern. He was intensely curious about an extraordinarily wide range of issues and designs normally not under the architect's purview. In addition to plumbing, he found men's hats, furniture, footwear, fashions, and undergarments all to be significant cultural expressions on a footing with architecture.

During the 1890s, he spent three years in America visiting New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago and working at assorted odd jobs from dishwasher to journalist to furniture designer. In Europe, Loos had received a conventional training in architecture, but it must have been his American sojourn that provided him with a more thorough apprenticeship. On his return to Austria, Loos settled in Vienna, then a lively cultural capital.





Top: Portrait sketch of Loos by Oskar Kokoschka, 1910. *Above:* Loos's entry for the 1922 Chicago Tribune Building competition, a skyscraper in the form of a Doric column. It did not win.

Among his friends were the artist Oskar Kokoschka, the composer Arnold Schönberg, and the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. While Vienna gave Loos an intellectual focus, he detested the typically overblown, ostentatious and self-satisfied taste of his contemporaries. To Loos, imperial Vienna with its complacent pretensions to rank and nobility, was a joke, and he would spend much of his career directing witty barbs against this sleepy Brigadoon, prodding and cajoling it into the 20th century.

His most notorious jeremiad was contained in an essay called "Ornament and Crime," written in 1908. Like Sigmund Freud, he assumed that all our actions and expressions have a sexual basis. He stated unequivocally, "All art is erotic." The earliest ornament, he thought, was a response to a sexual impulse to rid its maker of excess energy. While he regarded such unbridled zeal excusable in the work of children or primitive societies, he believed it to be a sign of criminality and degeneracy in modern man. Ornament and crime? This odd association made Loos seem like a snarling spoilsport eager to deny everyone his whipped cream. From now on coffee will only be served without *Schlag*, he seemed to be saying. The currently fashionable critics of modern architecture have turned the problem back on Loos. They psychoanalyze him and ask what could have been wrong with a man who was so upset with a little ornament. Perhaps he was repressed? But repression seems not to have been his problem. He was married four times and had innumerable affairs.

But if he did not have an inhibited personality, what led him to make such seemingly quirky pronouncements against ornament? His reasons for attacking decoration in design and architecture were in fact based on economics. With modern machine production the ". . . work of the ornamentalist is no *(Continued on page 50)*



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(Continued from page 48) longer adequately remunerated," he wrote. Ornament, therefore, was not equated with crime by Loos, as some critics still think; rather, he considered it a crime against the national economy. He believed that handcrafted ornament that is produced in the modern context of machine production will by definition look strained and false. The "ornament disease," as he called it, does not even make life more pleasant: "The show dishes of past centuries, which display all kinds of ornaments to make the peacocks, pheasants, and lobsters look more tasty, have exactly the opposite effect on me. I am horrified when I go through a cookery exhibition and think that I am meant to eat these stuffed carcasses. I eat roast beef."

In a short essay on "Ladies' Fashion," Loos even applied economic



Villa Karma by Adolf Loos, 1904–06, between Clarens and Vevey, Switzerland.

considerations to his examination of dress. He asked why women's fashions were so much more elaborate than men's and then conjectured: ". . . woman acquires her social stamp through her husband, regardless of whether she has been a cocotte or a princess." Since woman gains her social position only by acquiring a man with status, Loos wrote, she must appeal to man's sensuality through her dress. Women who aspired to any sort of social acceptance were not allowed to be gainfully employed in the Vienna of his day. When this changed, he predicted, there would also be a change in female dress: "In those classes where woman has acquired the right to earn a living, she too wears pants."

What kind of buildings are we to expect from this architect who was interested in every facet of visual expression? Even though their exteriors are exe- *(Continued on page 56)*



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(Continued from page 50) cuted in a simple, even stark, manner, their interiors display a quiet elegance through the use of veined marbles and luxurious woods. Convention is never entirely abandoned. There are many references to a classical language of architecture: piers, coffers, columns, and even some ornament can be found in his designs. It turns out that Loos really appreciated deeply rooted traditions. What he despised was a sentimental nostalgia for an unattainable past that in architecture leads to false theatricality. At the same time he felt that the architect cannot search self-consciously for the creation of a modern style. He believed that style could not be invented—the direction was already provided by the larger cultural context.

Because of this belief, the exteriors of many of his houses are simple and modest, with very little ornament. The outside of a building, its public face, should never make a splashy individual statement, in his view, because it would disrupt the general setting. Loos thought the interior should be reserved for more willful expressions. Here in the intimate, private space of the house the social contract that ought to restrain the design of the exterior can be suspended. As he wrote, "The building should be dumb on the outside and reveal its wealth on the inside."

The most forceful indication that Loos did not reject tradition out of hand was his design for an international competition for a new building for the *Chicago Tribune*. While there were a large number of entries designed with classical columns or medieval turrets, Loos's proposal was by far the most consequential historicizing statement. He exploded the scale of a Greek Doric column to the size of a skyscraper. This could, of course, be seen as an ironic gesture, but more likely it was his belated response to America's classical tradition in architecture, a tradition he had experienced firsthand when as a young man he had visited the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. Loos in his Tribune Tower both simplified and enlarged the classical mode to such an extreme point that it could be called minimal classicism. His project is above all a monumental tribute to the classical spirit and to the plainness he saw inherent *(Continued on page 58)*



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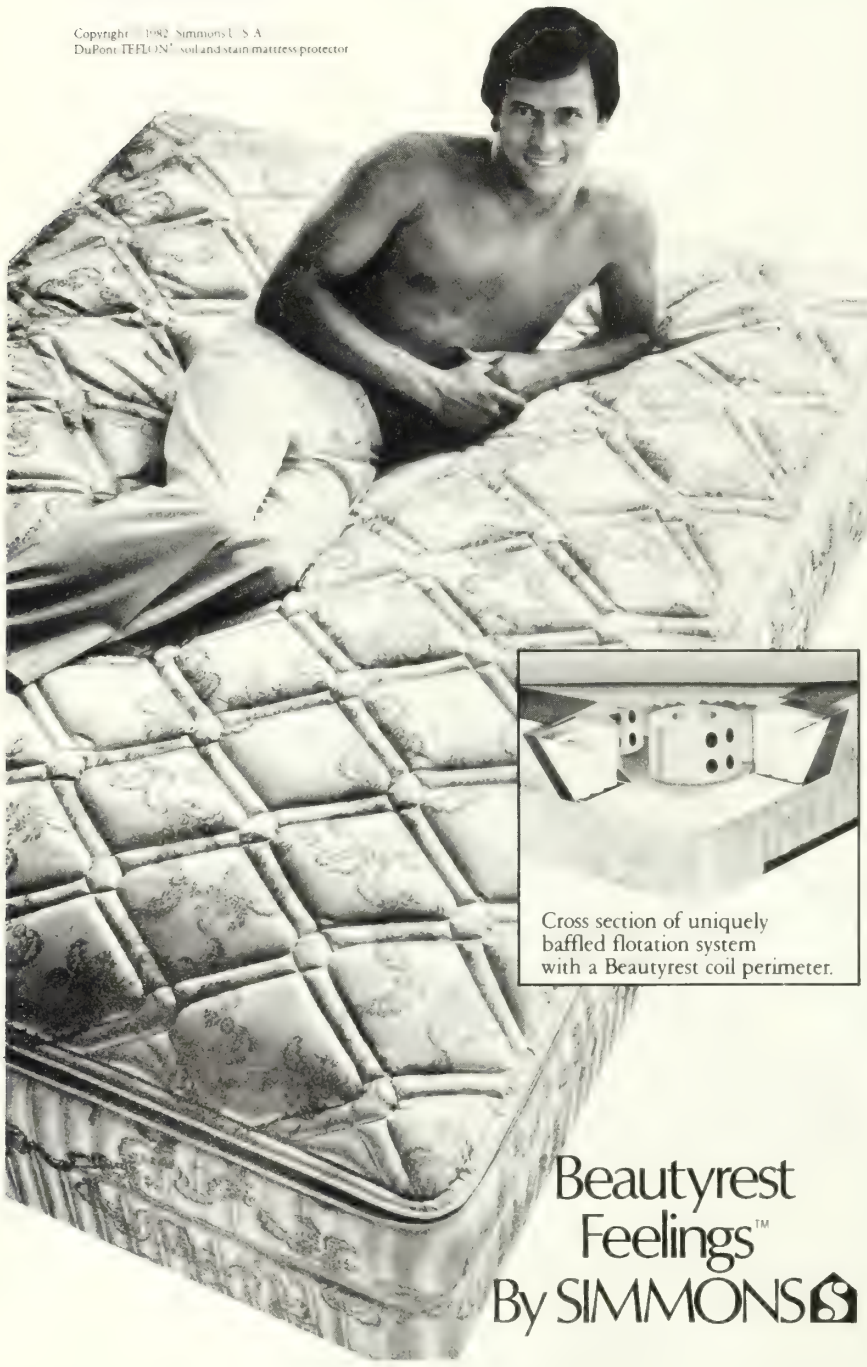
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Cross section of uniquely baffled flotation system with a Beautyrest coil perimeter.

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(Continued from page 56) in modern life.

The buildings and writings of Loos were appreciated by some of the major architects of his day, such as Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius. Loos's fate seemed to plummet a decade ago with the rise of Post Modernism and its obsession with historic motifs used in pell-mell fashion. It was precisely this sort of stage-set historicism, disassociated from meaning, that Loos had attacked. But now several new books on Loos have appeared that allow us to reevaluate his significant contribution: Benedetto Gravagnuolo's fine analysis of Loos's work, with excellent photographs by Roberto Schezen, and a much-needed English translation of his early essays. (A companion edition of his later writings will be published later this year by MIT Press.) Surprisingly, both books have introductions by the Italian architect Aldo Rossi. These are useful appreciations by a contemporary architect, revealing the continuing influence of Loos's buildings and ideas. Rossi's introductions are slightly different, though there is an unfortunate overlap of some sentences and phrases. All that remains for the future is an English translation of an important German book on Loos by Burkhard Rukschcio and Roland Schachel, (*Adolf Loos—Leben und Werk,* Residenz Verlag, 1982). It is not as comprehensive and critical as Gravagnuolo's book, but it contains a wealth of new information about Loos's life.

The icy clarity of his vision still feels like an electric jolt. His friend, the critic Karl Kraus, saw himself and Loos as unsentimental outsiders: "Adolf Loos and I, he literally and I grammatically, have done nothing more than show that there is a distinction between an urn and a chamber pot, and that it is this distinction above all that provides culture with elbow room. The others, those who fail to make this distinction, are divided into those who use the urn as a chamber pot and those who use a chamber pot as an urn." □

Rosemarie Haag Bletter, associate professor of art history at Columbia University, is an authority on early-20th-century architecture. Her forthcoming monograph on the German architect Bruno Taut will be published by the Architectural History Foundation.



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MY TABLE, MY SELF

The dining surfaces of our lives have many stories to tell. This is one of them

By Mary Cantwell

Perhaps it is lying in a dump somewhere, flat on its back, legs attacking the air. Or its wood may be ashes now, and the iron rusted and unrecognizable. Or perhaps it is still supporting plates and napkins, a sugar bowl and glasses. Did we leave it for the next tenants when we moved out of that dark 13th-floor apartment? Did we give it to friends? Or did we ask the doorman to see that it was put out on the street with the blue shag rug and the old mattress? What happened to the first dining table that was ever truly my own?

The top came from a door store and was bolted to wrought-iron legs. Knowing no better, I thought it looked wonderful. Very modern, I said to myself, very practical and very reminiscent of the Scandinavian imports to which I aspired and couldn't afford. It was a young-marrieds' table, and on it I put young-marrieds' food.

At other houses, young-marrieds' food was chicken roasted, though seldom long enough, on a Rotiss-O-Mat. We'd all received Rotiss-O-Mats as wedding presents, and ours, since the kitchen was tiny, dominated the living room. But my ambitions extended beyond spit-roasted chickens: my eye was on veal. Veal birds, to be precise—scaloppine pounded even thinner after I brought them home because the cookbook warned against lazy butchers, wrapped around little sausages, secured with toothpicks, and sautéed. Rice was the starch—so much newer than potatoes—and the salad was iceberg lettuce dressed with a vinaigrette made according to directions from the same cookbook. The salad bowl was wooden and was rubbed with a garlic clove before the lettuce went it. I had read about that, too.

The table mats were as thick as the shag rug, the wineglasses tottered on their lumpy foundation, the white plates were banded with blue, and the stainless steel flatware was Danish. I can still see the young woman who sat at that table because hers is the face I see even now in the mirror. No one ever says, no matter how many the years between meetings, "Mary! I didn't recognize you." But I cannot feel my way into that young woman anymore. I seem to remember, though, that she was proud of her iron-legged door and those bundled "birds"—so different from anything her mother ever cooked, so conspicuous a proof of emancipation.



TOM LEE

Portrait of the author's current table

But the table, where is the table? My memory is good, too good to guarantee eight hours' sleep, but not good enough to envision again the day when the Rotiss-O-Mat, the bedframe, and the books—many of them the detritus of college English classes—were picked up and moved across town. Instead I see my husband and myself standing in a shop in southern Massachusetts picking out a dropleaf mahogany table that cost $125 and was our first antique. It was English, early 19th century, and during its early years with us it was nearly polished to death.

It stood between tall windows, sa four comfortably and six if you pulle it away from the wall, and was dresse to the nines. More for it than for me bought Spode stoneware and plate English flatware whose pistol-handle knives toppled, and still topple, fro every plate on which they were placed There were little candlesticks, too, re productions from a museum shop, and where once I had been flighty with flowered napkins I was elegant wit cream linen. But I had retained an unfortunate affection for "interesting" placemats, and although the new batch resembled straw matting, which meant they were flatter than those that resembled rugs, the wineglasses still tottered and spilled.

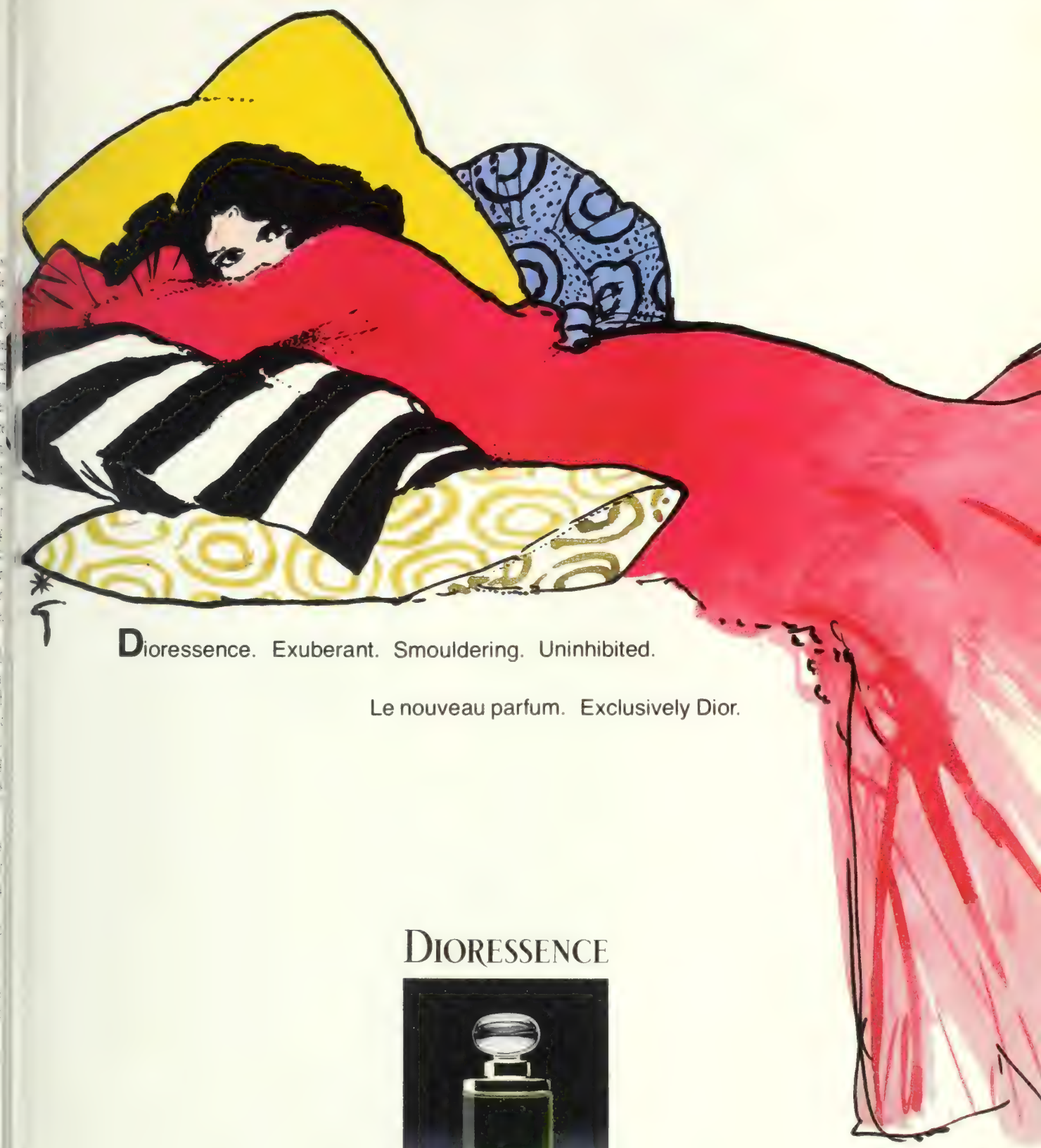
Veal birds were now part of a faintly scorned past. The scaloppine had turned into little pillows whose stuffing was mozzarella and prosciutto, and I had learned about deglazing the skillet. About wine I had learned nothing, fearing to venture beyond Chianti and Soave except on the rare days when I made a plunge into Valpolicella.

But I had learned about soufflés, practicing them night after night after night until arriving at the exact timing that ensured a firm top and a moist bottom. The same timidity that attended my wines, however, attended my soufflés: they were always vanilla. But although shy about everything else, I was not about guests. Few friends escaped my veal pillows, Soave, and soufflés.

My eyes were still firmly fixed on veal when the table moved to the next apartment. But I never got to the veal dish I wanted to cook, probably because I am too thrifty. No matter; everyone else did. It was called Veau Prince Orloff, was shrouded in heavy cream and Swiss cheese, and appears on page 355 of the first volume of *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*. That dropleaf table must have held half the offerings of *(Continued on page 62)*

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INQUIRIES INVITED

"I have as much faith in tha magic circle of clattering silver and tumbling conversation as a hunter does in a bonfire"

(Continued from page 60) Mesdames Child, Bertholle, and Beck, among them the Soufflé Rothschild with which I dazzled those palates now jaded by my vanilla. The dessert plates no longer matched the rest of the china. With age (27) had come the courage to clash.

The table, like Hitty, whose first hundred years I am all too eager to reread, moved again, this time to a duplex. It looked silly in the dining room. Too small. It looked even sillier in the kitchen. Too fancy. So it traveled upstairs to the right of the living-room fireplace, where it stood patiently holding a lamp and accumulating rings from glasses set down by careless conversationalists. The dining room, because we could find no table worthy of its Greek Revival grandeur, stayed empty; the kitchen acquired a large round of cheap pine screwed into four legs and bought by the side of a Massachusetts road. Or maybe it was Vermont. Whatever its provenance, it sat six, benefitted by scarring and staining (anything to ripen its raw youth), and served as well as a place on which to powder and diaper babies after their baths in the kitchen sink. In the meanwhile, the dining room yawned like a toothless mouth.

But we looked. Round wasn't right because all the rounds were golden oak and that wasn't our style. A mahogany rectangle was discarded because the dealer lowered the price when he found me underneath studying its legs and thought I'd discovered whatever it was that was not quite right about the joints. I hadn't, but I realized that it is wise to crawl under any table one contemplates buying.

Finally it was purchased. English, mahogany and oval. Six are happy there, eight are miserable. It was polished as often as had been the now neglected dropleaf in the living room. We are cruel to *(Continued on page 66)*

Charmaine



Shown here: Charmaine with correlated fabric from Precious Prints Vol. II

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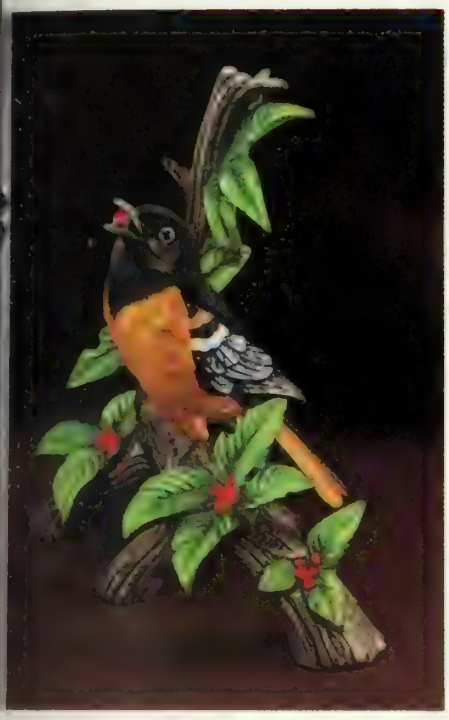
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"I was not sorry when we moved to a place where the dining room was small and the table nestled as if grateful for enclosure"

(Continued from page 62) those who serve us well.

How to define the life that was lived at that table? Let me say that often it involved fish forks and fish knives, that the veal was *blanquette de veau* after the recipe in *Michael Field's Cooking School*, and that the cook/hostess wore long dresses and had attained a domestic self-confidence so complete as to make her betray her true self. Male guests were known to say that she reminded them of their first wife.

Let us flash forward a few years. The kitchen table is in the living room of another duplex, covered with a quilt, that being the look of the '70s, and sporting an assortment of *objets*. The mahogany dropleaf is close to the entrance. It holds a pitcher of dried weeds and a small basket. On good days the basket holds invitations; on bad days, bills. The cook/hostess doesn't really care which. More interested in aesthetics than in practicalities, she happens to like the look of papers piled in a basket. The mahogany oval is in front of a window that opens onto a garden. The cook/hostess and her children face each other across a sea of veal piccata.

The three of us were lonely at that big table. Maybe that's why we demystified it, made it a site for homework and coloring books and paper dolls. The kitchen was too small to sit in, so we started eating all over the house, except on Sundays, when I insisted on placemats (linen), wine (thimblefuls), and concentration on the entrée. In retrospect, I wish I had insisted on such order every night. I have as much faith in the magic of that circle composed of light and clattering silver and tumbling conversation as a hunter does in a bonfire. Beyond both lie wolves.

Never mind, we managed, and eventually the table started filling up again with guests. Now the wine was from California, was bottled in magnums, and gave me *(Continued on page 70)*

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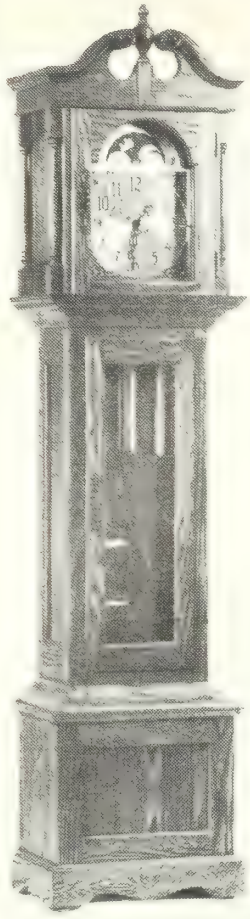
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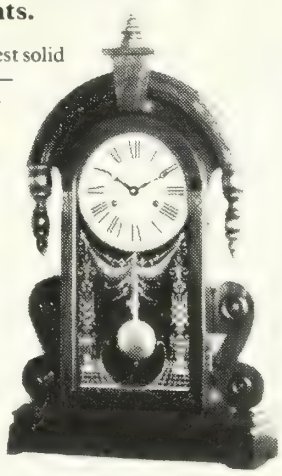
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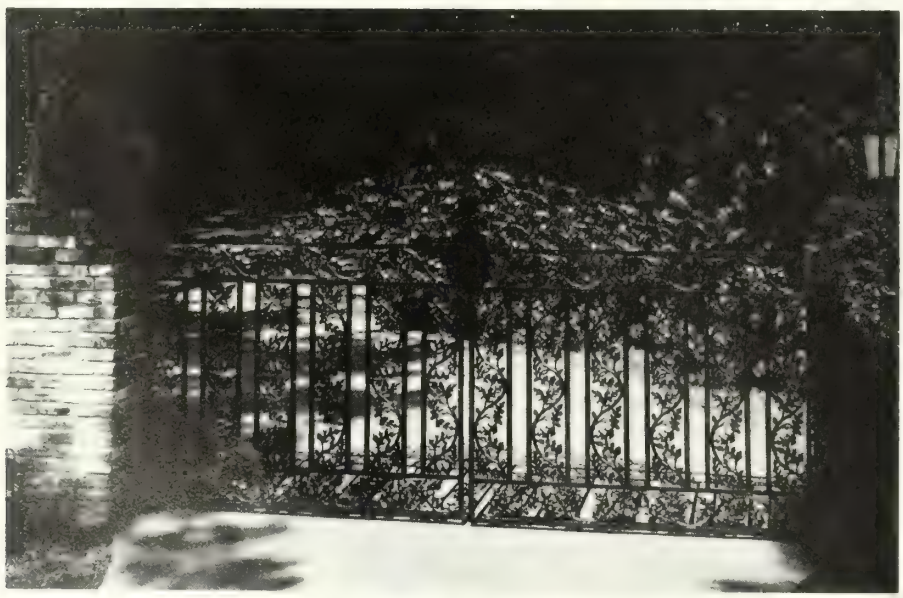
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(Continued from page 66) headaches. The cuisine was inching back toward my mother's, and the Spode demitasse had been replaced by flowered cups picked up at yard sales and second-rate antique shops. They were pretty: they held a lot of coffee; heaven is no barred to the woman whose cups don't match.

Sometimes, though, when we were alone, the children and I sang at that table, less out of joy than defensiveness. The dining room was huge. Beyond that mahogany oval stretched 20 feet of bare, waxed floor. We huddled, we raised our glasses and voices. No use. The space swallowed us, our singing and our spirits.

I was not sorry when we left and moved around the corner to a place where the dining room was small and low-ceilinged and the table nestled as if grateful for enclosure. And there it sits, a few feet from the old dropleaf, which still holds a lamp, but which is pressed into service at Christmas and becomes again what it was born to be.

The kitchen table is in its usual location, a living-room corner, but today it is covered by a murky cretonne and a modest collection of shell boxes and shell furniture. "Brighton, 1937," I say grandly, acknowledging both its ugliness and the fact that I have reached the point where there is no good or bad taste, only my taste.

The veal is *osso buco*. When one's children are large and one herself is rather large, having gained 20 pounds from the time of the iron-legged table, the kind of food that takes a generous platter seems fitting. Rather than serve, I tend to spear. "Here," I say, waving at those I've asked to join me what is by any other name a bone, "who's still hungry?"

But where is the iron-legged table? Where would I like it to be? I do not want it lying like a dead beetle in some dump. Nor, selfish though it may seem, do I want it bearing another family's dinners on its back. I loved that table and, because time has taught me tolerance, I love the young man and woman who owned it, too. I hope the table is ashes now. It, and they, deserve a kind and decent burial. □

Mary Cantwell is a member of The New York Times *editorial board.*

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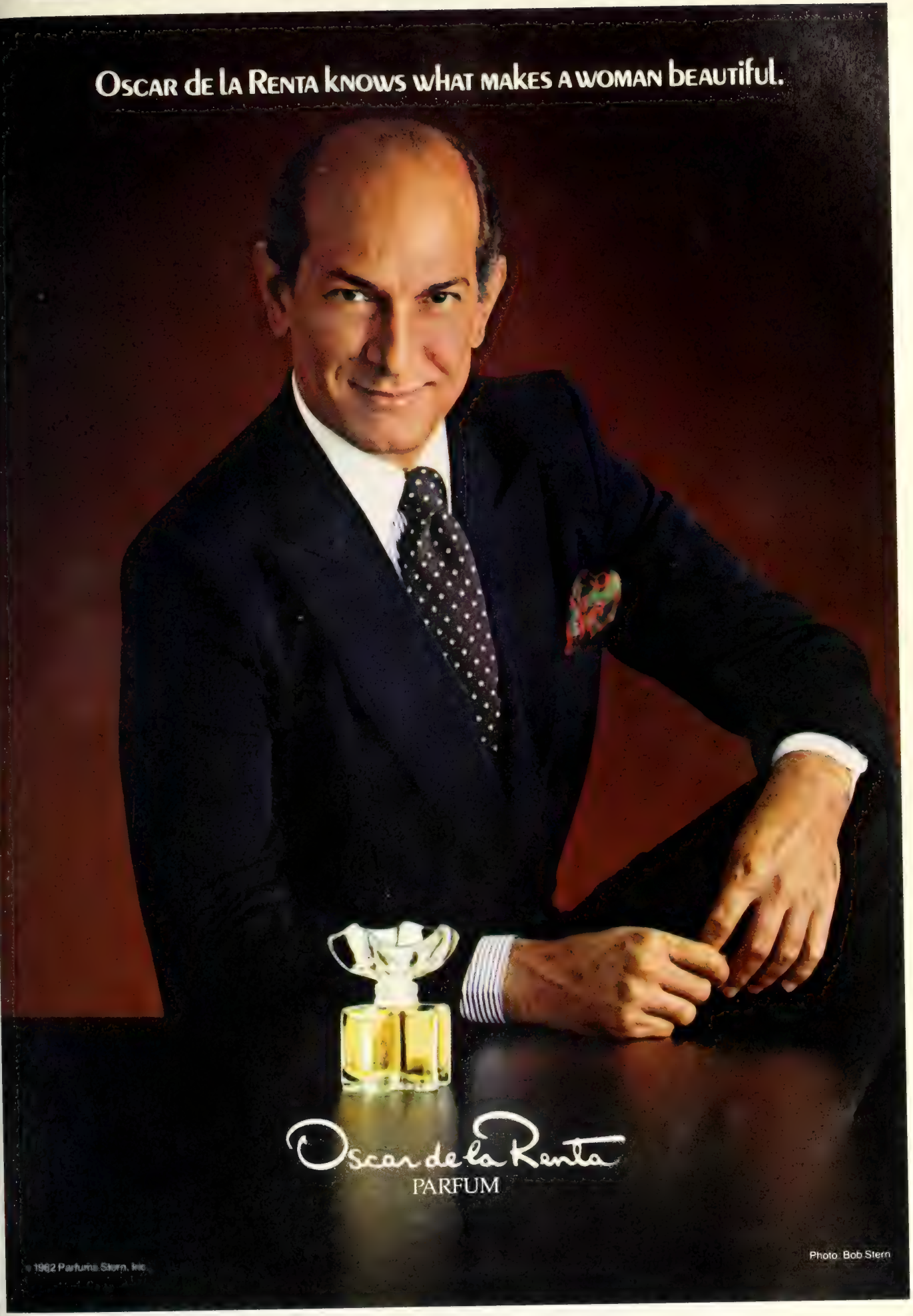


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FUNDING FOR THE ARTS

Joan Mondale and Andrew Heiskell discuss the issues

By Elaine Greene

During the Carter Administration, some people called the Vice President's wife, Joan Adams Mondale, Joan of Art—but she might have carried that label throughout her adult life. Honorary chairman from 1978 to 1981 of the Federal Council on Arts and Humanities, Joan Mondale began her career as a slide librarian at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. While her husband Walter was senator, she guided tours through Washington's National Gallery; in 1972 she published a book, *Politics in Art;* and she is a professional potter. Joan Mondale is deeply troubled about the effect of present-day politics on present-day art.



Joan Mondale



Andrew Heiskell

"There are two profound ways in which Reaganism has hurt the arts," she says. "The first is his change in the tax law. When large corporations used to be taxed on a 70 percent base, it would cost them only 30 cents to give a dollar to a hospital or library or art museum. Now Reagan's base is 50 percent and it costs the business executive half a dollar to give a dollar—almost twice as much as before. The reduced incentive is causing great reluctance on the part of grant-givers of the past."

Government funding, though historically smaller in volume than private gifts, even after the founding in 1965 of the National Endowments of the Arts and Humanities, is crucial, says Mrs. Mondale, and Reagan's cut in funding is the second cause of harm. "The arts depend upon consistent, reliable, modest support. The margin is very narrow between success and failure, and the federal government has in the past saved many arts endeavors. Carter's last budget for the NEA was $158 million. Reagan's first budget called for $77 million with a plan to abolish the endowment the following year. Representative Sid Yates [Democrat from Illinois], Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee for arts and humanities endowments, finally managed to raise the sum to $143 million. This is a significant drop, especially in view of inflation, but the greatest damage has come from the Administration's not spending what Congress appropriated. Reagan's appointees in the arts are hostile to the arts: much of the money has been frozen; grants have been held back. Since Richard Nixon impounded appropriated funds he did not want to spend, a law has been passed requiring the executive to act upon Congress's decisions, but enforcing it is a slow, awkward process."

And what are the effects? Joan Mondale says her random examples are typical of much more. "Utah's Ballet West and the Oregon Symphony halted 1982 summer tours. The Colorado Central City Opera House canceled its 1982 summer festival for the first time since World War II. Innumerable museum shows have been called off. A West Coast theater company says it will survive, but that it can't take any chances with new playwrights."

Andrew Heiskell's views are quite different. We spoke with him just two weeks after the formation (on September 21, 1982) of the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities and his appointment as its head. This group's purpose is to interest corporations and individuals in helping to support the arts and humanities. "We will test approaches in various places and work with already existing groups such as the Business Committee for th Arts. I see our role as creators of a ambiance sympathetic to givin money in these areas. We will en courage, work behind the scenes."

Andrew Heiskell is glad to se some funds coming from the federa government, but he says, "Th problem with federal funding is tha it is not personal; it turns into a cor versation between auditors. I lik better the idea of a Des Moine business supporting a Des Moine ballet company, of Des Moines citizen helping to raise money for the loca chamber music group and then attend ing its performances."

Heiskell approves of complexity i arts support. "The important thing i the mix. If there are three layers of gov ernment support, this is good. It diss pates the control factor and gives th recipients more autonomy. When pri vate money comes into the mix, it is sti better for the artists."

Retired chairman of Time Inc., An drew Heiskell considers himself a vol unteer in his work as Harvard Trustee chairman of the New York Public Li brary, an now as head of this commit tee. "Volunteers who feel themselve responsible for supporting institution with their donated money or donate time or both are essential in the art and humanities and education." H points out that the New York Publi Library's superb reference collectio serves anyone who walks in, unlike th government-supported libraries in Eu rope that are open only to cardholders "Our library is partly government sup ported, but it can do what it does be cause it is heavy with volunteers an private contributors—the ideal mix."

In years to come, Andrew Heiskel feels, we will all have to live with re stricted funds. "Everyone, artists in cluded, will have to be more aggressive and inventive to get their share. No on will be able to relax and feel they ar owed support." □

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AN AMERICAN ATTITUDE



BY JOHN RICHARDSON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY HORST

This romantic Federal house, built half a century ago on a wooded stretch of water in New England, is something of a phenomenon in that the owners have so evidently spurned a conventionally decorated look. The antithesis of Charles Dickens's Veneerings—"bran new people in a bran new house in a bran new quarter"—they have set their hearts against modishness, against the tyranny of a specific style or period. Wisely they have let their penchants be their only guide. And thanks to more than a fair share of taste and knowledge and self confidence, they have come out ahead of the game, although, Heaven knows, that was not their intention.

I know of no other American house where so much contrivance has gone into making things look the reverse of contrived; where superb furniture and objects—much of it inherited—has been arranged with such apparent casualness; where everything is lovingly maintained but treated with such benign neglect that I feel I am back in England. And what a relief to find people who are not panicked by signs of wear-and-

Left: On the landing of the front hall staircase, a 19th-century American trompe-l'oeil needlework pelmet from Elinor Merrell and ornamental lion-head tiebacks from Parish-Hadley. A late-18th-century Russian Neoclassical chandelier hangs from the ceiling. In the entry hall, an English clock and 18th-century English painting. *Above:* The front of the house, with a Palladian window, reflects a Classical heritage.

tear into perpetually replacing carpets and slipcovers. As you can see, things are left the way they are—badges of a kind of inverted pride.

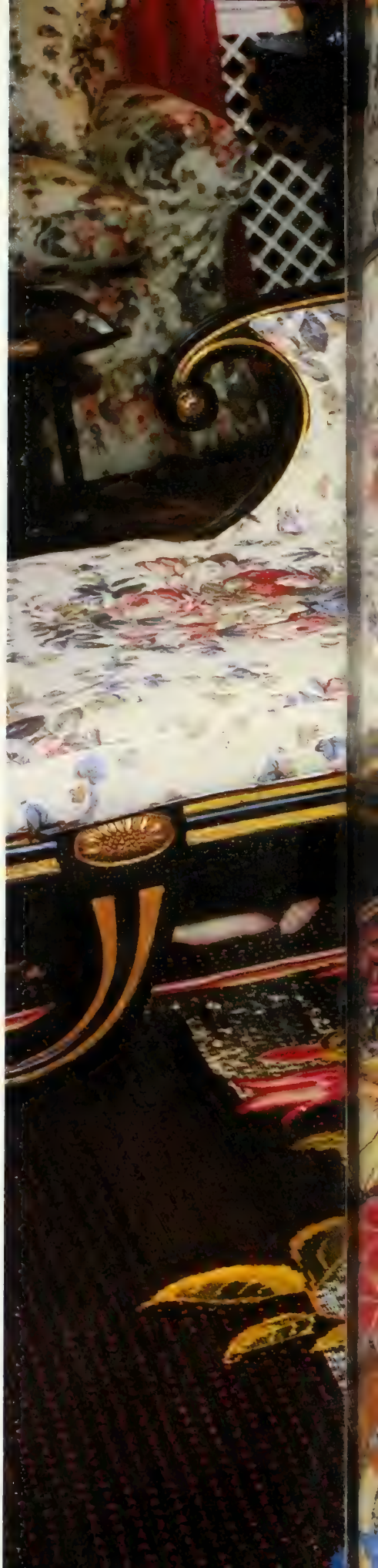
Elsewhere in this issue I have quoted Mario Praz's philosophy of decorating, how a harmoniously decorated house should "mirror man in his ideal being," and be "an exaltation of the self." This house is one of the rare examples of Praz's precepts, for it reflects in no uncertain way the artistry, intelligence, and originality, not to speak of the quirks of the lady who got it all together.

If there is one element that unifies these handsome rooms, it is the lavish use of colorful 19th-century stuffs—not fancy silks and velvets but the kind of floral cottons that belong in the country. And here the owners of the house have been able to draw upon the knowledge and—no less important—the stock of Elinor Merrell, doyenne of fabric experts. From Miss Merrell come the antique chintzes, usually English but sometimes French or Portuguese, which provide the upholstery or wall-hangings of practically every room, not least the bathrooms. And if these fabrics look so at home here, it is largely thanks to Louis Perez, who solved the intricate problem of piecing these fragile fragments into a succession of evocative settings. A profusion of fine 19th-century needlework cushions, chair covers, and rugs in the brilliant seed-packet colors of Victorian wools—especially in the living room and master bedroom—light up shadows with an incandescent glow.

Although the only evidence that the lady of the house is an accomplished artist is to be found in the billiard room, where panels of Zuber wallpaper (the set known as "Scenic America") have undergone peculiar *pentimenti* at her diligent hands, the entire house reveals that a painterly eye has been at work and it is especially true of the upstairs rooms. Daring but subtle juxtapositions of pattern and color—old chintzes again—remind one of early Vuillards in which Misia Sert and the Bibescos are depicted against a sublime mishmash of "Liberty" wallpapers, plush portières, and Oriental screens.

The artist's eye also explains why everything in the house is in tone. Nothing jumps; no *m'as tu vu* color schemes give one nasty visual jolts. And the very few modern stuffs that are in evidence—for instance, the linen covers that freshen the living room in the summer—have been printed on ivory or ecru grounds so as to blend in with fabrics that the years have warmed and mellowed.

Since the indefatigable owner constantly comes up with new ideas for the house, she needs a decorator to interpret them. Here she has been most fortunate to have had Albert Hadley (of Parish-Hadley Associates) as a lifelong friend. Hadley knows just how to read his client's gifted mind and carry out edicts that are all the more challenging for being extravagant and idiosyncratic. "She has more taste than anyone



Right: In the living room, an American Empire chaise with a Victorian beadwork pillow. Furniture is covered in printed linen for the summer. Underneath the gilded early-19th-century Italian Regency table with white marble top, a needlepoint footstool. The Victorian needlepoint rug was found by Albert Hadley in Chicago.









of her generation," says the decorator, and he always goes to infinite trouble to see that things are just the way this perfectionist wants them. The only problem is that, like Beau Brummel tying a cravat, she is not satisfied by mere perfection: things also have to look utterly natural.

The panache of the place is tempered by the warmth and informality that the owners generate around them. For, make no mistake, the house is primarily a family house, a private retreat where life focuses on children, relatives, close friends, and dogs; a place where tennis and swimming, gardening and homework are the order of the day. And if the décor stands up miraculously well to the rough-and-tumble of family existence, it is because this is the least uptight of country houses. A guest is far more likely to stumble on a dog's toy in the hall than on one of those leather and moiré seating plans that are said to be mandatory for smart hostesses.

After the children, the dogs' well-being is of paramount importance, hence the telltale claw marks on small chairs that are to be found by many of the beds. Like so much else in the house, these chairs are for the convenience of three overindulged quadrupeds who would not otherwise be able to hoist their plump *(Continued on page 196)*

Left: With the printed linen covers removed, the living-room furniture reveals its winter dress. Books line every inch of wall space and the Queen Anne secretary is placed in front of shelves along the far wall. An 18th-century English portrait hangs over the fireplace. Above the low black lacquered screen, one of a pair of Italian gilt and carved sconces. *Above:* Library walls are upholstered in twill. The floor was painted by artist Robert Jackson in the 18th-century style to look like marble. An English Empire bookcase is reflected in the convex Regency mirror characteristically decorated with a mix of Prince of Wales feathers, dragons, and Egyptian motifs.



The dining-room table was designed by Albert Hadley in the Biedermeier style. On the table, 18th-century Waterford bowls. Mahogany chairs are late 18th-century Russian. Over the fire, a Rembrandt Peale painting. In the arched wall niche, Queen Charlotte porcelain. Nearby, a mahogany Directoire screen. Curtains are made of 19th-century French serge from Elinor Merrell. Painting by Severin Rosen is echoed by the brimming epergne beneath. Victorian Brussels carpet was found by Vincent Fourcade.



Right: On the American Empire bed, a 19th-century Argentinian chenille quilt. In the secretary, a collection of Japanese teapots from the 18th and 19th centuries, and a porcelain hand warmer in the shape of a badger. In front of the fire, a gingham dog keeps watch. The 18th-century English trumeau combines woodwork, mirror, and painting. Underfoot, an Oriental silk rug. *Below:* The guest bathroom's portière is made of old Elinor Merrell chintz, with modern chintz on the walls and vanity. Chair is cushioned with beadwork. On the floor, a fragment of a needlepoint rug. On the vanity, a 19th-century candelabrum.







The billiard room of the guest house is presided over by a wooden Austrian stag with horn antlers. Walls are covered by panels of Zuber scenic paper, with chimney breasts painted by artist Robert Jackson to give the appearance of continuity. Empire-style chairs designed by Albert Hadley. On the painted marble-like mantel, English Coalport urns flank a bullseye mirror. A 19th-century French tole light fixture hangs from the ceiling.







CAMEO CLASSIC

BY MARTIN FILLER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY HORST

Works of art in miniature are frequently regarded as curios, evoking feelings of fascination and delight, but rarely the more profound emotions summoned up by larger things. The same is true in architecture: the jewellike Gothic Sainte-Chapelle in Paris, Bramante's tiny Renaissance Tempietto in Rome, and Schinkel's Neoclassical pavilion at Charlottenburg Palace in Berlin are in all the history books but are generally overlooked by the public in favor of many larger, but lesser, buildings. To that list of neglected masterpieces must be added one of America's greatest contributions to the art of architecture in miniature: a small summer house designed and built nearly 200 years ago by the architect and craftsman Samuel McIntire.

By the closing years of the 18th century, Salem, Massachusetts, had become not only a prosperous shipping port, but also a seat of great artistic cultivation, a proud distinction for a small town so close to the much larger cultural center of Boston. One sign of Salem's importance is that by the 1790s it supported no fewer than a dozen master cabinetmakers whose names are still highly respected in the history of their art. The fashionable style popularized by Robert Adam had already begun to wane in London by that time, but it was still very influential in the former Bay Colonies and formed the foundation for our own Federal style in architecture and furniture. For many years the most accomplished interpreter of that style on these shores was the Salem architect and woodcarver Samuel McIntire. What made him especially successful as a designer was that he did with the Adam style what Adam had done with the architecture of Roman antiquity: he used it only as a starting point, but never as a crib-sheet, creating something reminiscent but always highly inventive, based on tradition but skillfully adapted to the specific needs of a very different new setting. *(Continued on page 98)*

Left: The Derby Summer House in Danvers, Massachusetts, a small (but by no means minor) masterpiece of American architecture built in 1794. *Overleaf:* The second-floor room of the Derby Summer House is furnished with reminders of Elias Hasket Derby's involvement in the China trade, including the room's twin treasures, an extremely rare mirror-image pair of Chinese Export camphorwood and cane Recamiers, upholstered in pink raw silk.







The leading arts patron of Salem was the legendary Elias Hasket Derby, an immensely rich merchant who made his fortune in the China trade and lived on a level of sumptuousness probably unrivaled in the days of the young Republic. In 1793, when he was 60 years old, Derby asked McIntire to design a summer house for his farm in South Danvers (now Peabody). It was a folly as fine and frivolous as any built by an English lord, but it was also deeply symbolic. Elias Derby's summer house was not just a century but a civilization removed from the old Salem of witch hunts and dark, cramped medieval houses, and it announced in a most convincing way that the Age of Reason had come. *(Continued on page 198)*

Above: The entry hall contains an early-19th-century bust of an unknown gentleman. *Opposite:* The summer house was originally painted a soft gray to simulate stone, a trompe-l'oeil effect heightened by the boldly articulated, masonry-like keystones and quoins. The building was painted white in the early 19th century to accord with the new Greek Revival taste.





THE BARE AND THE BEAUTIFUL

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN VAUGHAN





Preceding pages, above, and opposite top: Three views of the Marianis' huge living room. Unfinished Louis XVI chairs were waxed to look like fruitwood. Garden stools are painted bamboo. The marble bust of Caesar, an 18th-century copy of the one in the Vatican Museum, *opposite bottom,* is the only art in the room besides the antique sedan chair—"an architectural sculpture"—the moldings "like modern paintings," and the bas reliefs over doorways and fireplace.

When John and Elizabeth Mariani first stepped into their Nob Hill apartment, they were greeted with aubergine walls and "40 or 50 chair legs," the color and furniture both inherited from the previous occupant.

"We lived with those things for a few months," says John Mariani of Mariani Design, "but found we weren't comfortable with the somber formality. We're young, flexible, and easy to live with," he explains, "and our apartment wasn't. We were ready for a fresher look."

Enter Australian friend and designer John Coote, who set the wheels of change in motion. "Coote had been researching grand old houses," chuckles Mariani, "and when he saw that our apartment had the same kind of charm and perfect proportions, he cried 'Lighten up! Clear it out!' and that's exactly what I did."

Because he and his wife are in the apartment mostly at night, Mariani designed with the evening light and city view in mind. Icy pink walls, a shade deeper in the

dining room, were inspired by the gradated colors in the vast Blenheim Palace library, which Mariani visited while studying art in England. "They give just the slightest sensation of warmth," says Mariani of the walls, "instead of actual color," to flatter the "porcelain-pale" complexions of San Franciscan women, especially his blonde wife. Rose-tinted mirrors serve the same purpose. "Sunset, which can often be gloomy in an apartment, is the most beautiful time of day here," says Mariani. "The sky and the walls turn from blush to subtle violet to beautiful mauve. And the mirrors make the whole apartment seem like a never-ending gallery."

As the rooms opened up, Mariani uncovered their inherent luxury—extraordinary space and light, "which can be as glorious as a house full of the finest things." Furniture is minimal—"part design statement, partly because we don't have that much!" Period pieces are in the 18th-century style, echoing the Neoclassical archi-





tecture. Everything else "knows no period. The goatskin tables in the dining room could just as easily be Roman stone," says Mariani. In the living room, chairs are meant to be moved about during parties, as conversations flow. "I wanted the furniture to respond to people, instead of constraining them," he says.

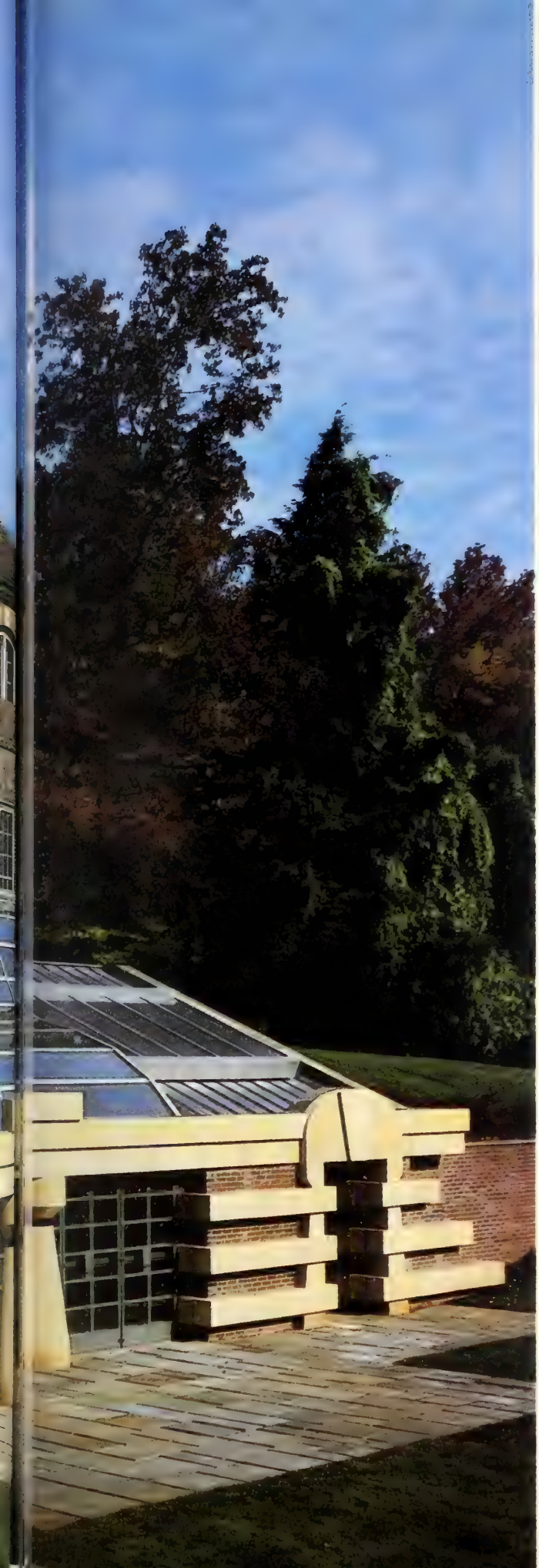
Mariani used fabric to "soften the Neoclassical discipline just slightly," curtaining French doors with long sweeps of cloth topped by whimsical jagged valances. Draping the living-room console with a pin-dot cotton "offsets the severity" of a chiseled bust of Caesar Augustus, as do a clutch of family photographs.

The Marianis entertain often. "I guess we're a bit of a throwback," they confess. "We love sit-down dinners with proper service, good linens, beautiful food. No balancing-act buffets!" □ *By Mary Seehafer*

Opposite: Dining room's linen chair covers "change with our seasons—spring, fall, and lunch." Doors between rooms inspire "grand Loretta Young entrances." *Above:* Because the apartment is sparsely furnished, ever-present, often-changed flowers, like this abundant 18th-century-style bouquet by Donald Ohlen, are a piece in their own right.









BRIGHTON LIVELY

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
NORMAN McGRATH

A Georgian Revival mansion in a staid old community gets a surprising new pool-house addition by architect Robert A.M. Stern: its wide range of historical references, from ancient Egyptian to Art Deco, adds to a tradition that has often evoked playful responses but rarely weighty ones.

Left: The pool-house addition Robert Stern designed for a mansion in a suburb of New York. The sandstone-and-brick base supports an undulating steel-and-glass roof complete with solar collector panels. *Above:* The kitchen of the Brighton Pavilion, circa 1820, source of inspiration for the interior of the pool house.







No one could ever say that architect Robert A.M. Stern tends toward the expected in his designs, and one of his most recent projects turned out to be anything but that. From the looks of things on the outside, however, no surprises are immediately apparent. Stern was asked by a New Jersey couple to renovate a house for them and their large family. Their property is in a venerable suburb near New York, a landscape of mature splendor, with arching elms and towering oaks overhead. The house itself was equally imposing: an enormous Neo-Georgian red-brick structure built in 1929 that still retains an air of quiet propriety on the exterior, despite the architectural antics that it now encloses.

The really startling aspect of the house is actually invisible from the front, though it is a presence indeed from the garden side of the property. To satisfy his clients' rather modest wish for an indoor swimming pool, Stern concocted an eye-filling pool-house addition that is a veritable cram course in architectural history. Most noteworthy of those references to earlier architecture—a Stern trademark—are a pair of stainless-steel-and-brass columns that support the rippling steel-and-glass roof of the pool house. Inspired both by the cast-iron palm columns in the kitchen of John Nash's famous Brighton Pavil-*(Continued on page 112)*

Left: Double flight of curving steps leading down to indoor pool. Stepped panels conceal indirect lighting fixtures, which give an Art Deco effect. *Above:* Metal palm trees by Hans Hollein in his Austrian Travel Bureau Jewish Welcome Center in Vienna. *Overleaf:* Interior of pool house, looking toward garden.

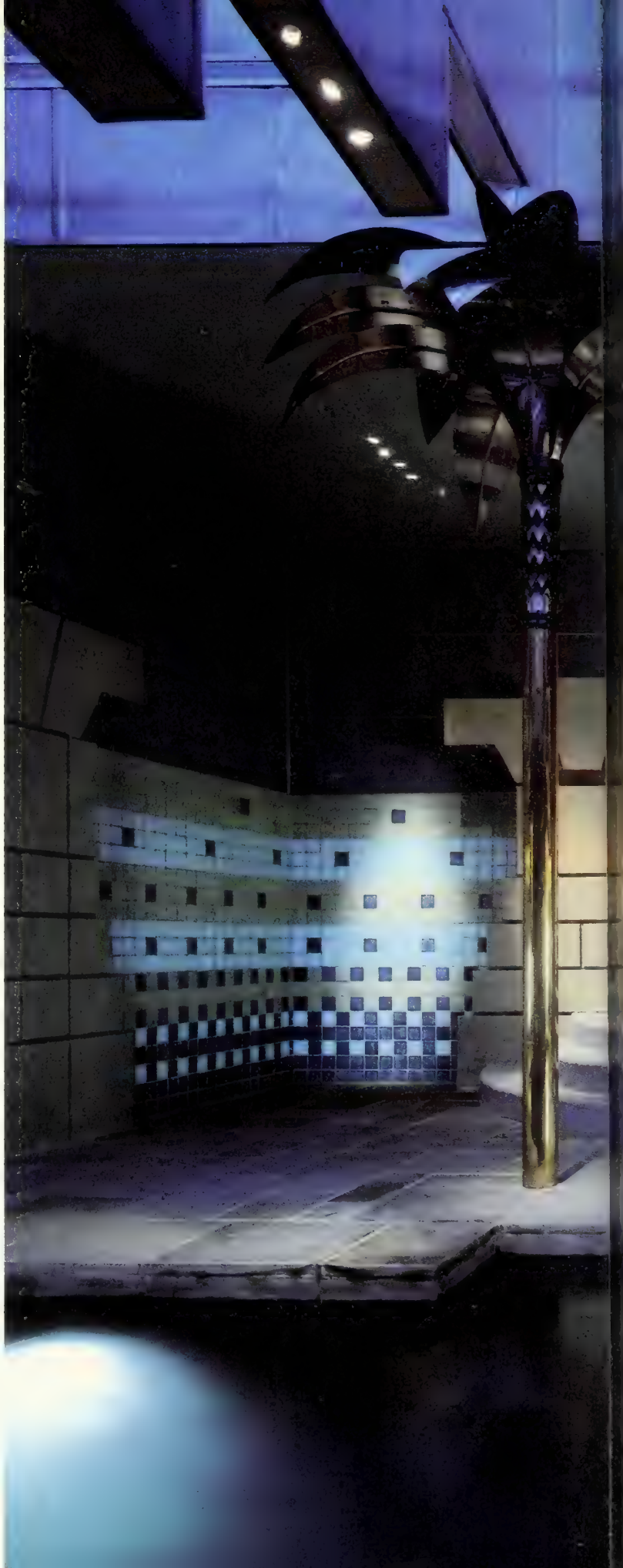


ion in England and a series of Vienna travel agencies by the contemporary architect Hans Hollein, they add a note of glittering surprise.

Stern's other reworkings of the existing structure are revealed only gradually as one passes through the spacious and somewhat formal rooms. His main departure from tradition on the first floor of the house was to combine several smaller living and reception rooms into one large, loftlike living space, comprising a living room and dining room that are defined within the larger area by means of a curving partition wall of Stern's invention. These rooms are furnished with several famous early-modern design classics—such as Le Corbusier's famous "Grand Confort" chair and Mies van der Rohe's equally well-known "Brno" chair—but as the architect pointed out to the owner, they are still chronologically appropriate for a house built in 1929, even though the house itself is not modern.

Another historical reference in the living room is a graceful caryatid mantelpiece retained from the original structure. Illuminated display cases show off the family's collection of antiquities. The rug is patterned after the room's floor plan. This central space on the first floor leads off to a study and sunroom on one end, and a family room and kitchen complex on the other. The owners report that the interconnecting spaces work especially well for the large-scale entertaining that they enjoy.

The second floor of the house is enlivened by a bold diagonal corridor that separates the area into two isosceles triangles, into which Stern has worked a central master bedroom suite and separate bedrooms for each of the owners' five children. All in all, in most of the house things are not that much more unexpected than in many other homes in the area. That is, with the exceptional exception of the lavish leisure space that has become for its owners their own private Fantasy Island. □



Right: Interior of the pool house looking toward the residence. Stainless-steel-and-brass palm trees are actually disguised supporting columns. Walls are tiled in alternating shades of blue and beige ceramic tile and, above, in blue glass panels, with other areas stuccoed to resemble carved stonework. Floor surrounding pool is bluestone.





Right: Entry hall faces curving partition wall that screens living room behind it and dining room at far right. *Above:* Dining room is dominated by table designed by Stern, which separates into two smaller tables. "Brno" chairs by Mies van der Rohe are upholstered in pale-green suede. Console tables at left and right rear are also Stern designs.





Above: Large rug by Stern embraces two seating areas, with chairs in foreground by Mies van der Rohe and chairs and sofa around the fireplace by Le Corbusier. Caryatid mantelpiece is original to the house, though Stern installed the indirect lighting fixtures above it.
Left: Living-room side of curving partition seen on preceding page.

A VERY PERSONAL LUXURY

BY ELAINE GREENE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY EDGAR DE EVIA





Preceding pages: Jean H. Vanderbilt's New York apartment is sumptuous yet informal—a combination requiring an almost acrobatic sense of balance. In a window corner of her living room, a splendid full-size double bed by Jacob functions as a giant chaise. Nearby, propped on the two-sided easel of a Regency drawing cabinet: the print of the moment, this one Indian. *Opposite:* The entrance hall, a utilitarian space of jogs and openings, is transformed into a Neoclassical stone chamber by its stylized wallpaper. *Right:* Seating in the living room is generous in quantity and in size and softness. Walls are covered in dark-green strié velvet; trim of pistachio and ceiling of pink are Vincent Fourcade's way with red and green.



The rooms must not look new. They must give the impression that they evolved over generations, never touched by a decorator." So say Robert Denning and Vincent Fourcade, who formed a partnership in 1960 based on their lavish interpretation of the late-19th-century European style: their interpretation, not a replica of Sigmund Freud's study or Marcel Proust's bedroom but a dream of yesterday that seems authentic today, a stage set for living in. The partnership has flourished, and except for a certain loosening up they have held to the style they began with and watched the rest of the design world catch up. They have seen the 19th-century furniture they used to buy for nothing start making auction-room records, seen the development of Post Modern architecture, seen other decorators move into historicism with a flourish. As steadfast as the partnership and the style is the loyalty of clients. The men have decorated eight houses and a boat for one couple, and four homes for Jean Vanderbilt, owner of this apartment.





As nature abhors a vacuum, Denning and Fourcade abhor a blank spot. "Outrageous luxury is what our clients want; we have taught them to prefer excess," they say. Except for bedsheets, nothing in the designers' rooms is plain white, and those bedsheets are invariably trimmed with lace and embroidery. If an architectural detail is to be a pale neutral—not white but cream or oyster gray—it will have a faux marbre or grained finish. In Jean Vanderbilt's bedroom there are white window shades, but they are white lace.

Although the furniture, fabrics, and objects that Denning and Fourcade choose are mainly Continental in origin, they describe their attitude as English. "It is the country English who live with grandeur in an everyday way." And everyday comfort is an important property of Denning and Fourcade rooms. "The very height

Preceding pages: A separate dining room had occupied two-fifths of the living space and Vincent Fourcade removed its wall to achieve one long flow, suggesting a separation with a double-faced bookcase. *Right and below:* A trio of unusual 1930s paintings by a French set designer march across the inner wall of the living and dining room opposite five windows hung with striped balloon shades. The paintings reminded the decorators of murals on the *Normandie,* and they felt the mystical subject matter suited their client. The dining room's screen, hiding the door to the kitchen, is antique crewelwork applied to a new backing.







of luxury is to have your senses pampered while taking your ease."

The Denning and Fourcade look is not easily imitated, for it is not just a matter of razzle-dazzle furniture and layered details. The telling ingredient is sentiment—the spirit that brings Proust and Freud to mind—the weight of apparent, and in some cases authentic, family history. Treasured possessions—art, rugs, furniture—are worked in, and clients are encouraged to cluster framed family photographs, display Grandfather's yachting trophy.

One way to achieve rooms that seem to have evolved is to relax standards of perfection. Signs of wear in a rug, for example, are certainly not cause for banishment. Antiques that are not quite best-in-class are welcomed. "Availability is an important element in decorating," Bob Denning says. "The very best is not always to be had, and second-best is perfectly acceptable in the total mix. It is part of that casual English attitude about grandeur." It is an attitude that has given over two decades of success to two men of great taste, and they are more à la mode than ever. □



Left and below: The master bedroom is based on a collection of lacquer furniture and a vivid wallcovering. Mrs. Vanderbilt has been accumulating lacquer pieces for several years, including the Brighton-style Regency secretaire, which she uses as a dressing table. All the objects here have a special personal meaning. Fourcade enjoys this client's appreciation of bold pieces and patterns, shown in her lack of hesitation about using such a strong bedroom wallcovering. The bed is a prettily curved Edwardian cane piece in the Louis XVI style. Curtains are layered, lace over coral moiré.



LADY BIRD JOHNSON'S HIDDEN FAMILY FARMHOUSE

BY MARYBETH WESTON PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSHUA GREENE



If you knew that someday your house would be a historical museum your children and grandchildren could visit only as tourists, what plans might you make so your family wouldn't feel uprooted? For Lady Bird Johnson, the answer was to fix up a neglected little house nearby—strictly for her family and friends. "Nothing will ever take the place of the ranch house," says Mrs. Johnson, "but this little house will have its memories, too, and I like to think that the land here will still know us."

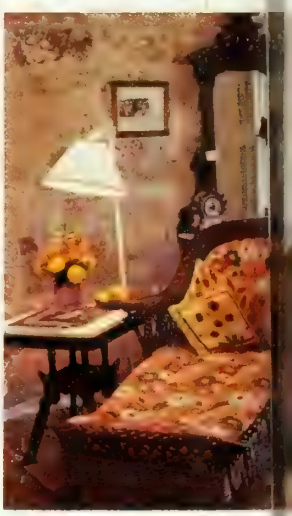
The Johnson family hideaway is only a few miles from the familiar ranch house. To get to it, you open a creaking pasture gate, leave road and fences behind, and go up a rutted lane through Texas junipers, live oaks, and wildflowers. Then suddenly: a peak-roofed limestone farmhouse that looks out over rugged Texas landscape and dependably dramatic sunsets. " 'Sunset House' served a German-Texan family in the 1890s," Mrs. Johnson says. "I love it because it has mellowed with age and experience." Like the ranch house, it has huge oaks, feeders for birds and deer, and porches with rocking chairs and swings. It is decorated in ways that *(Continued on page 218)*

Above left: Lintel above fireplace in Mrs. Johnson's own bedroom at Sunset House was original back doorstep; andirons were made by Lee Weigl, one of the last local ironsmiths. *Above:* Mrs. Johnson with her four Nugent grandchildren, from left, Lyn (Patrick Lyndon), Rebekah, Claudia, and Coco (Nicole).

Top row, from left: Cecil Presnall's traditional faux bois work around window makes new wood compatible with old; stagecoach in window is part of a small folk-art collection. Hand-painted kitchen tile of Texas wildflower by Wilanna Bristow. Texas-star iron bench once was at the Cotulla train station. Zinc-topped dining table was gift from a friend. The Johnsons on their honeymoon at Xochimilco Gardens outside Mexico City, in 1934.
Second row, from left: Behind chaise in Mrs. Johnson's bedroom is marble-topped bureau, once her grandmother's. Texas-star tin mold is displayed in kitchen. The bedroom addition opens to the outdoors, as do all the rooms. More Wilanna Bristow tiles form a local sunflower in the kitchen.
Third row, from left: Flowers from the ranch house garden were arranged by Jimmy Hernandez of San Antonio. On Mrs. Johnson's high-backed bed is a Texas-star quilt. Traditional stenciling in this corner, and throughout the house, was done by Maggie Flannery. Mrs. Johnson with daughters Lynda, at left, and Luci in 1947. Comfortable living room has furniture Mrs. Johnson calls "more second-hand than antique." Willow rocker on the porch, one of several, is for enjoying mild weather, watching breathtaking Texas hill country sunsets.













"It's important to me to make joyful use of anything I'm part of, and this place gets a workout. I like knowing that someday it will be a cushion and resource for my family, a place with memories for them"



















A FRANKLY GLAMOROUS TOWN HOUSE

BY MARY SEEHAFER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL WARCHOL

Very sophisticated, yet thoroughly approachable, this Manhattan apartment beckons with a thoughtful balance of all-out glitter and plenty of comfort. "When I plan a room, particularly a luxurious room, I always factor in pampering details," says interior designer Craig Raywood. "For my own apartment, I was ready for a classic, adult look, after living in a trendy gray apartment with platforms. And since the look I chose was especially rich, I made sure my guests were pampered, rather than put off, by the grandeur."

For Raywood, who entertains frequently, that meant hanging some of his photographs and paintings a little lower than normal, so they are at eye level when friends are seated. And in the living room, he built out one of the walls to create a bar purposely close to the chairs "to avoid those lulls in conversation when someone leaves the room to refill a drink."

Designing his own apartment also allowed Raywood the freedom to indulge in some favorite fantasies, such as "living inside a wonderful St. Laurent shirt"—walls in his living room are covered in silk crepe de Chine. As for the furniture in this room, "No sofas," he decreed. "I hate to twist my neck to talk to someone." Instead, everyone has his own chair for face-to-face conversation, "and the black upholstery frames everyone wonderfully." There is no shortage of seating—chairs are 36 inches square "and can hold three or four people each during parties." With furniture set in the center of the room, "there's no easy path from end to end. You're almost forced to slow down and get to know the room," says the designer. Other welcoming details are more subtle, but no less important: living-room chairs angled "like tie-back *(Continued on page 134)*

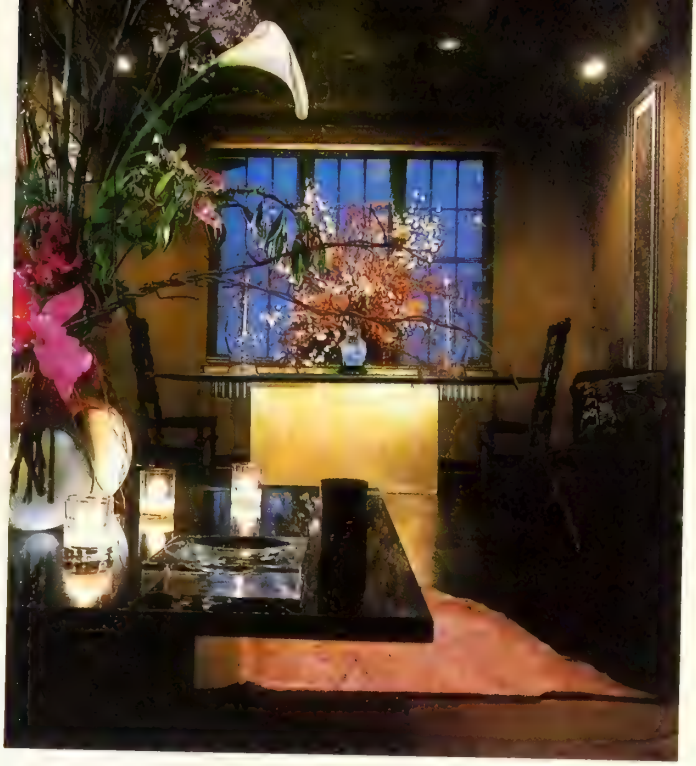


Right: Large Nevelson collage over the fireplace inspired the living room's color scheme. Like modern antimacassars, gold-stenciled suede skins top the backs of three chairs; on the fourth, two pillows cut from an 18th-century Chinese silk panel. Floral designer Daniel Galippau wrapped vases and pots with the bark of the coconut palm. On the far wall, painting by Ronaldo de Juan, hung low, and a horizontal Sigrid Burton painting hung vertically.

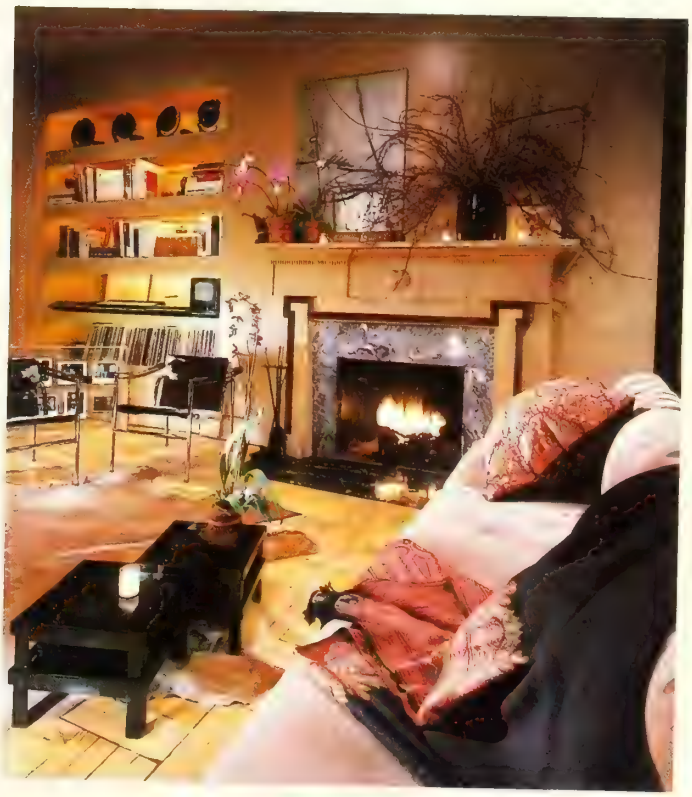








Left and below: In the den and throughout the apartment dramatic lighting takes the place of ordinary lamps: the cantilevered banquette floats on a sea of light, shelves glow from within. Spotlights and firelight weave a web of sparkling reflections from desk to chairs to vertical blinds. *Above:* In the dining area is a granite-topped table designed by Raywood; its base is covered in gold-leaf tea-paper squares, as is the ceiling. On the table, a Sabino vase filled with dried branches and flowers. On the wall, a Chinese panel.



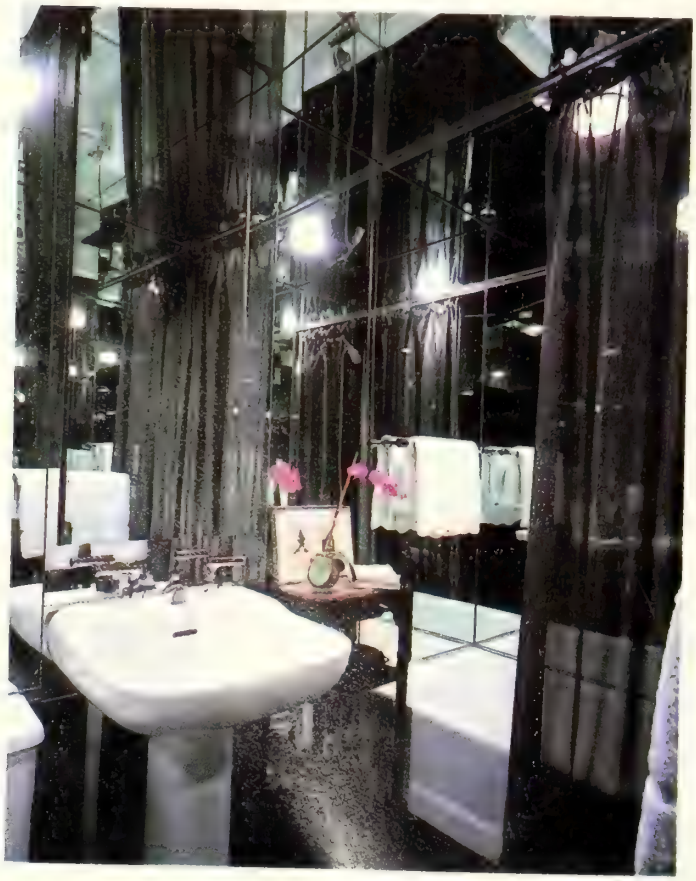
curtains" to the dining area beyond, the hallway painted matte black, void of furniture or paintings, to "erase your impressions of the living room and prepare you for another space."

One large space that seems like two, the den and bedroom area is divided by vertical blinds for the illusion of a window and a feeling of privacy on either side. Opened, they bring light from the bedroom window into the den. The oversized, cantilevered, solid-steel desk was designed by Raywood. "My power desk," he laughs. The 1928 Le Corbusier "Basculant" sling chairs, which Raywood has always admired, were the first things he purchased for the apartment.

In the bedroom, the floor was raised, the ceiling lowered, setting an intimate stage. A few steps away, the bathroom shimmers like a glistening cube of ice. All the walls and the ceiling are mirrored, and the spectacular shower curtain, nylon shot with Lurex threads, has the look of lightweight knight's mail. Pulled from a closet to live a new life by the sink, a slim 19th-century Chinese table is stacked with linen hand towels. Once used, they are dropped into the glass cookie jar beneath. □



Right: Bed is covered with sueded pigskin and a cross fox throw. Wool flannel upholsters the walls. In the den, behind the desk, a Ming chair, a Nevelson aquatint, a Robert Turner photo-silkscreen of Valentino dressing his models. Behind the Le Corbusier chairs, Mark Platt photographs float in clear acrylic. *Below:* For the bathroom, Raywood decided that "mirror and marble would be the ultimate luxury." Of his towels, he quips: "I'm the only one who buys white when I go to Porthault." Drawings by Robert Kipness.







Rooms have turned up consistently as a theme for artists ever since the Renaissance, when they served as a pretext for the most dramatic feats of illusionistic perspective; more recently, modernist artists have played around with the shifting identity of wall and picture plane in their quest for literal flatness. Just as we can often discover something important about the owner of an actual room from looking at some specific object in it—so we can learn something about the artist who painted a room from a close examination of one of its significant elements. Here are four diverse examples.

THE TELLING DETAIL

BY LINDA NOCHLIN



SOTHEBY PARKE BERNET INC

SOME NEAT CUSHIONS, 1967
DAVID HOCKNEY (b. 1937)
PRIVATE COLLECTION, CALIFORNIA

Some Neat Cushions offers David Hockney the occasion for some neat visual and verbal punning. It is literally true that some but not all of his cushions—the three triangular ones in blue and red in the center of the couch—are really "neat" in the sense of being geometric in form, primary in color, and absolutely symmetrical in composition. The rest of the cushions, presumably the ones that aren't neat, are scattered more carelessly on the green surface of the very up-to-date couch.

The motif of Hockney's painting, a mere piece of a room, might have served as a detail in older, more traditional art. The painter insists on the fragmentary character of his composition by the way he manipulates his objects, brutally bisecting the one living thing in the picture—the plant in its cachepot at the left—and allowing us only a glimpse of the piece of furniture to the right, the top surface of which creates another triangle—gray this time—echoing the form of the "neat cushions" of the title.

The poignant empty chairs, of course, remind us of van Gogh, who invented the theme at the end of the 19th century, and whose work Hockney does in fact admire immensely. But the empty couch is miles away from van Gogh's passionate expression of feeling. Clear, cool, withheld, mysterious, Hockney's room-painting is a sophisticated, ultramodern icon of provocative emptiness.

The overdecorated, disorderly anteroom of *After the Marriage* serves Hogarth well as the setting for his satire of matrimonial disaster in early capitalist England. Hogarth wittily combines the strategies of narrative and allegory in this the second painting of his *Marriage à la Mode* series of 1743–45, a series that even-handedly pillories the greed and cynicism of the decadent aristocracy and the ludicrous social ambitions of the *nouveau riche* merchant class. Disaster follows, this room proclaims, when a poor but high-born lord and a vulgar, climbing heiress are forced by their parents to marry for mutual advantage rather than honest affection.

In *Marriage à la Mode*, Hogarth consistently equates bad taste with moral failure, and bad taste is epitomized by the pretentiously exaggerated classicizing interior decoration promulgated by William Kent. In this "morning after" scene, Hogarth makes the overloaded mantelpiece, which meaningfully separates bride from bridegroom, into a little monument of 18th-century British conspicuous consumption, bristling with symbolic references to a marriage coming apart at the seams. The jumbled, "barbaric" Chinese figures raise their arms in mock alarm; the broken nose of the severe and disapproving Roman bust proclaims its imperfection; even the little cupid, normally a personification of love, plays a cacophonous bagpipe rather than the traditional lyre, in the midst of a heap of ruined masonry.

Slovenliness, discontent, and the after-effects of dissipation are everywhere in evidence in Hogarth's luxurious interior. The overturned chair in the foreground, with its scattering of violins and music, is an obvious indicator of disharmony, but there are more specific clues here to invidious goings-on. A copy of *Hoyle on Whist* lies open near the splayed feet of the young woman, indicating that the bride has been spending her night in the drawing room in the company of card-players. Her husband has spent a night on the town, and his sword, significantly broken, has been carelessly tossed on the carpet; the dog, traditional symbol of marital fidelity, sniffs suspiciously at a lady's bonnet protruding from his lordship's pocket as the latter stares morosely into space. To the left, a faithful steward carries off a sheaf of unpaid bills and raises his eyes to heaven. Obviously, all these marble columns, old-master paintings, French carpets, Oriental knickknacks, and late-night shenanigans have cost a pretty penny!

Hogarth, lightening his message with limpid, rococo color and witty drawing, nevertheless leaves little to our imagination. His room serves as a bad example, preaching the gospel of industriousness, honesty, and tidy housekeeping to the English public on the eve of the Industrial Revolution.



MARRIAGE À LA MODE: AFTER THE MARRIAGE, 1743–45
WILLIAM HOGARTH (1697–1764)
NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON

NATIONAL GALLERY LONDON


C. Harper
Studios

VINCENT'S ROOM
AT ARLES, 1888
VINCENT VAN GOGH
(1853–90)
ART INSTITUTE OF
CHICAGO



Van Gogh wrote to his brother Theo that his picture of his bedroom at Arles was an expression of "perfect rest." He felt that the rushing perspective, the acid colors, and the intensified contours called forth both the idea of sleep in general and a sense of great peace. Even though the painting as a work of art may suggest a more ambiguous or even a frankly agitated state of mind, it is undeniable that this simple bedroom with its rustic, hand-hewn furniture and rough, unpolished surfaces represented for van Gogh the comfort of intimacy, a shelter from the pressures of the outside world and the impinging disorders of the internal one. For van Gogh, his bedroom stood for an affirmation of the peace he so desperately sought and so rarely achieved.

It is almost as though the artist attempted to create companionship for himself in the way his bedroom is furnished: two chairs, two pillows on the bed, two paintings of male figures on the wall to the right. This suggestive doubling reminds us that Vincent was hoping for a visit from his friend Gauguin when he painted this picture. Not only the perspective but a whole variety of interesting objects calls us into the heart of the painting, where van Gogh has chosen to represent the humanizing irregularities of his smock and hat as well as the protruding frame of the window and the stark, blank white rectangle of the mirror. But most important, the perspective summons us to the table, which stands stalwart and foursquare, bearing its burden of basic personal items.

The table, with its jug, pitcher, glass, and soap dish, drawn with earnest naïveté and painted with deliberate roughness, serves as the symbolic counterweight to the dominating vermillion-covered bed at the right. If the bed is a shrine of sleep, dreams, and darkness, its curves and color hinting at a repressed but powerful sensuality, then the table is the altar of daytime consciousness and control, brisk and perky in its forms, dedicated to the productive activities of wakefulness and the refreshment of body and spirit after work. The brown, crumbly texture of van Gogh's table is like good bread: it is the most ordinary, reassuring, and down-to-earth object in the whole painting.

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO





THE RED STUDIO, 1911
HENRI MATISSE (1869–1954)
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART,
NEW YORK



The vast, rust-red surface of Matisse's *Red Studio* is what strikes us first: the wonderful, simplified drawing that transforms this surface into a studio seems almost like an afterthought. In fact, many of the objects—the clock, the chest of drawers, the picture frames, the table, the glass, the bases of the statuettes, even the perspective line at the left, which suggests that this is in fact a space and not a flat plane—seem carved in white contour out of a preexisting flat red surface. *The Red Studio* is at once a statement about the independence of vanguard art at the beginning of the 20th century and a demonstration of that independence. Within its imaginary confines, the painter sets forth his achievements, adumbrates in decorative form objects of his desire. It is no accident that eight of the artworks represented concern themselves with the female nude. Although the artist himself is not present, maleness as a controlling principle of artistic creation is subtly asserted: an alter ego, the *Young Sailor* of 1906, is given the place of honor at the center, guarding over his two-dimensional harem. The world of nature intrudes on the world of art only once: a decorative but preternaturally vitalized green vine springs out of a rigidly erect vase to embrace an inviting nude figurine in a humorous modern replay of the classical Laocoön theme. All the elements of Matisse's art are condensed here: a resolute will to flatness and condensation of form; an inexhaustible sense of the potentialities of the curvilinear; and the confident association of pictorial pleasure with the naked female body. □

Linda Nochlin teaches art history at City University Graduate Center, New York, and is the author of Realism, Gustave Courbet, *and* Women Artists 1550–1950.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK

BUILDING FOR A VIEW

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER AARON

Two miles up in the Colorado Rockies is a house that seems to grow straight out of the mountain slope, like the surrounding aspen trees. It is stained the color of those trees; it respects nature reservedly on the outside while it draws nature joyfully inside with its spectacular views.

The house came about because the couple who owns it sought the privilege of privacy—in their eyes, isolation, anonymity of person and place, a way of life far from the city but not without a certain formality. An old friend of theirs, Laurence Booth of Booth/Hansen & Associates in Chicago, turned out to be the architect who best understood their particular needs. The owners liked the precise form of his earlier work as well as his use of textures new to the mountains. Booth had spurned the rustic vernacular in the design of a Miesian house a few miles from the couple's 16-acre lot, a project that also showed a convincing familiarity with the problems of mountain building. But more than for a landmark appearance, the house was built for the view.

In spring and summer the bucolic scene close to the house is of horses and cattle grazing against green; in winter a herd of 40 elk lives on a nearby mesa against white. In fall, the magnificent terrain off to the jagged horizon resembles a roughly knit sweater of red, orange, yellow.

This point close to the top of the world was meant to be a place for its owners' private passions for solitude, skiing, books, and music. But the house they built demonstrates that privacy isn't so much an inwardness as an expansive view. □

By Duncan Maginnis



The original drawings were of a design boxy and rectangular but needing enlargement, so the arc of the south wall—the dominant architectural theme—evolved as a compromise between too much and too little extra space.





The front door is at the base of windows arranged in a shape as frankly architectural as a T square—or, says the architect, as natural as a tree. Siding is cedar stained the color of aspen tree bark, trim the color of the underside of the aspen leaf.



The main space of the house, where music, fires, and quiet company are enjoyed, is two stories high with a vaulted ceiling. Owners and architect praise contractor Ron Price's careful construction, evident in the details of this room; interiors are by Chicago designer James A. Abston.



Left: The kitchen was placed off th curve of the sout next to the dinin area so the woma the house could be close to her g

Below left: This bedroom is part third-floor guest suite; the master bedroom is at the opposite end of this level.



Right: The superl view south from main room is wid but the gridding the wall maintain sense of enclosur security, comfort. day's worth of southern light co through these windows, is abso by stone floors a released at night passive solar heat



Bronzes: A

BY MICHAEL HAL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY HORT



Bronze sculpture has returned to its former glory. In ancient times Greeks and Romans polished bronze statues of their gods and goddesses to resemble precious gold. Time darkened and enriched their patinas, and such Italian Renaissance artists as Ghiberti and Donatello revered them in that state. Later, sculptors imitated these richly burnished surfaces to give us the handsome patinas we know and again appreciate

Right: The Genie Guarding the Secret of the Tomb by Charles-René de St-Marceaux shows the influence of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel frescoes. *Left:* Giambologna's *Venus Marina (Fortuna)* was most likely created for the Medici.

Collecting Renaissance



Choose only the best piece by the well-known sculptor

When I was a child in Missouri and California I delighted in the parlors of my great aunts and grandmothers, where bronze figures of coquettish bathing nymphs and Teutonic musclemen masquerading as Atlas and Hercules were casually placed under huge bouquets of silk and feather flowers. Fierce Viking warriors poised on gaudy Spanish mantillas led a long procession of elephants and snarling tigers. Ferocious lions growled at groups of frightened deer, and nervous whippets chased the inevitable ball. They all paraded pell-mell across library tables, knickknack shelves, and out onto the lawns and gardens where they cavorted around St. Francis atop a birdbath, who looked down upon a naked mermaid in the goldfish pond.

By the 1920s, Art Deco dictated that less was better, and Elsie de Wolfe and others banished all such dark and murky bibelots. Our attics and cellars were filled with these old friends. The attics were my castle towers, the cellars my dungeons; these lonely rooms became my museums, and I their chief curator and electrician. Coffee-can spotlights illuminated rusty fencing foils, seashells, and warped polo mallets, around which I rearranged these sculptures into what must have been indeed a bizarre *cabinet des curiosités*.

Often I am asked if it is still possible to collect Renaissance bronze statuettes and objects. My answer is a qualified yes, if you become something of a trufflehound, rooting out these treasures in very proper or very unlikely places. Leading auction houses are primary sources; today these fascinating and beautiful curiosities are not much collected and often pass through the salesrooms at very low prices. This is particularly true of plaquettes and medals, which for me are the most interesting of all, difficult to understand and requiring exhaustive study.

Aside from the auction houses and well-known dealers, as every seasoned collector knows, one must search everywhere: flea markets, tag sales, fancy and humble antiques fairs. On a recent September morning in an open-air market in upstate Connecticut, I spied a beautiful 16th-century Venetian winged cherub twisting and turning in Titianesque *contrapposto* nestled next to a broken china Kewpie doll. The cherub was once the handle of a fireplace tool in a grand *palazzo,* and the price was much less than that of the 1920s Kewpie doll. Such happy discoveries are of course not likely without first developing one's eye.

Almost every major or regional American museum possesses a small group of bronzes for first-hand study. Unfortunately, in this country, no important museum collections of bronze sculptures are permanently on full view the way they are in Europe: at the Victoria and Albert in London; the Louvre, Paris; the Bargello, Florence; the Kunsthistorisches, Vienna; and the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam—to name a few. Ten years later the medals, plaquettes, and small bronzes still await their promised new installation in Washington's National Gallery. The Metropolitan Museum of Art displays only about a third of a vast and important collection because of a serious lack of funds and exhibition space. The unique works in the Frick Collection are dimly lit and shown too far from the viewer.

With some exceptions, bronze sculpture has traditionally been produced in a studio workshop and required many different hands in the overall production of each piece. Such was the practice of early Italian artists: Verrocchio, Giambologna, Bernini, and Algardi. The master would sculpt the original models in wax or clay; copies could be made either by assistant sculptors imitating and working under the direction of the master or by taking casts directly from the original works. Giambologna and his many assistants (Anto-





Far left: Gimbologna's *American Turkey,* among the rarest of bronzes, commands the poultry price of one million dollars.
Near left: Joseph Renda's *Chanteuse/Boy With Cymbals* illustrates the move toward naturalism that was part of the reaction to the Neoclassical style of Antonio Canova.





Near right: A hand-sized bust of Voltaire modeled around 1778 by Jean-Baptiste Pigalle. *Far right:* In 1880 actress Sarah Bernhardt sculpted this combination inkwell/self-portrait.

nio Susini, Pietro Tacca, and Pietro Francavilla) had a flourishing business in the 16th century, producing a repertoire of bronze groups and statuettes well into the 17th century, even after the master's death in 1608. To the novice's eye similar bronzes of the same design may appear to be identical. However, even sculptures cast from the same mold will differ considerably. Many subtle differences evolve during the final finishing, chasing, and filling. Bronze sculpture can, of course, be reproduced mechanically, but the delicate quality of handwork cannot be recreated.

From the 16th to the end of the 19th century, the aristocracy and the wealthy middle class used sculpture in bronze primarily as fashionable decoration. By the end of the 16th century, every monarch and minor princeling had to have a Giambologna sculpture: a centaur abducting Deianira, a Venus after the bath, or a satyr unveiling a slumbering female nude. Famous artists also created fashionable bronze interpretations of classical sculptures, such as the Apollo Belvedere and the Marcus Aurelius equestrian monument. Statuettes almost always have been cast in duplicate, even in ancient Greece and Rome, but never more so than in 19th-century France. Bourgeois society wanted to own popular works such as Antoine-Louis Barye's *Lion Attacking a Serpent.* Thousands of versions were cast, and there was no stigma in owning copies—even of varying sizes. Today, however, one can be especially selective and choose only the best pieces by the finest sculptors and dismiss the rest as mere period relics. Even Rodin used this studio procedure of mass production. His chisels probably never touched a marble, and certainly he scarcely worked on his bronzes after they were cast. Rodin scholars still disagree as to the countless numbers of bronze casts, yet the business of producing them by the French Government continues to this day.

In the past, bronze sculpture has appealed primarily to masculine taste. Some of the great collectors were J.P. Morgan, Henry Clay Frick, Andrew Mellon, and the Rothschilds. The prominent connoisseurs were Wilhelm von Bode and Leo Planicsig for sculpture, E. F. Bange for plaquettes, and Sir George F. Hill for medals. Perhaps women found bronze sculpture too ponderous, cold, and reminiscent of the dark corridors and cigar-smoke-filled clubrooms of the 19th century. Today, almost as many women as men are authorities, curators, and scholars specializing in small bronze sculpture. Two of the most prominent collectors of bronze sculpture are Jayne Wrightsman and Belle Linksy. Mrs. Wrightsman uses important 18th-century bronze sculptures as a counterpoint and decoration for her collection of 18th-century French furniture installed in the Wrightsman Galleries at The Metropolitan Museum. Belle Linsky has recently given her little-known collection of Renaissance bronze masterpieces to the same museum.

Current prices for major bronze masterpieces are perhaps beyond the means of most buyers; but good quality bronze sculptures of moderate prices are still available, and in general 19th-century French sculpture is still an area in which a collector can make his mark. Italian sculpture of the same period still remains relatively undiscovered and underpriced, particularly Neapolitan sculpture, which—with its boy ragamuffins and abandoned harpies—has a genre fascination all its own. Resembling the paintings of Jean Louis Forain and Toulouse-Lautrec, they surpass anything produced in France at this time. Even if your first plunge is a timid purchase of a small Art Nouveau plaquette by Oscar Roty or Alexandre Charpentier—just a small thing, you say at first—take care, for you too may find-yourself obsessed.

Michael Hall is the owner of Michael Hall Fine Arts Ltd.



HIDCOTE MANOR

A masterwork of 20th-century gardening

BY ANTHONY HUXLEY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARINA SCHINZ



Two of Hidcote's most enthusiastic admirers, Harold Nicolson and Vita Sackville-West, were themselves creators of a much-copied garden. He praised the design's fusion of expectation with surprise, its mingling of the formal and the wild. For her it was "a jungle of beauty, a jungle controlled by a single mind, a jungle never allowed to deteriorate into a mere jungle but always kept in bounds by a master hand"



The garden at Hidcote Manor has probably had a greater influence on modern British gardening than any other. To approach it through the narrow lanes and hamlets of thatch and golden stone of the gentle Cotswold country is captivating; to enter the garden without previous warning of its style or quality is to be amazed. Every corner seems to conceal an entrance to an enclosure with a different layout, purpose, and set of plants, each a design adaptable to a single smaller garden. A few steps take one from the formal to the semiwild, from the control of trimmed hedge, paved path, or grassed walk to informal glade, lush streamside, and natural-seeming wood or rock bank.

It may come as a surprise that the creator of this most seminal British garden, Major Lawrence Johnston, was born an American, in 1871. After his father died, his mother married another American, but the family then lived in France for many years. Lawrence Johnston went to Cambridge University and trained as an architect; a few years later he became a British subject and served in the Boer War. In 1907 his mother bought him the Hidcote property, which included a pleasant stone house and a 280-acre farm, and she lived there with him for nearly 20 years.

Lawrence Johnston started immediately to plan and lay out a garden. There was nothing there to adapt or alter apart from a small, unrecorded garden by the house, dominated by a huge cedar of Lebanon. It was an unpromising site on an open, exposed hilltop, the soil heavy clay and alkaline, though with a stream meandering through.

It was a time of cheap, plentiful labor, and Lawrence Johnston used it to level terraces from the hill, and the garden's structure was fully formed by 1914 when the First World War interrupted development. Johnston fought with distinction as a major and returned to a much-neglected garden. During the next 20 years he worked on it and enjoyed its maturing.

After the Second World War Major Johnston made the garden over to the National Trust—the first garden to be acquired by that remarkable organization, which is, incidentally, a charity, not government funded—and lived permanently in the south of France till his death in 1958. Lack of labor in the war years had left the garden in a sad state. The design was entirely restorable, but the Trust had to reinterpret the plantings over several years.

On paper, the plan of the garden is based on what appears to be a very definite "T" shape, with a broad short head and a long narrow upright aligned to the southwest. But on the ground the existence of these two main axes dawns on the visitor only gradually, for neither can be seen nor reached directly from the other, and the proliferation of intimate compartments rapidly confuses one's sense of direction.

Entering the garden from a courtyard beside the house one can immediately walk into *(Continued on page 161)*

Preceding pages: The Old Rose Walk in midsummer. A colonnade of clipped Irish yews punctuates the luxuriant borders. *Opposite:* Planted architecture, a portico in clipped yew leads from the bathing pool. Clusters of Himalayan poppies, *detail above,* soften the somber mass of the hedge.







A few steps take one from the formal to the semiwild, from the control of trimmed hedge to lush streamside and natural-seeming wood. But the planting is never random. Color, form, texture are all deliberately considered: there is never a corner without color or interesting foliage









receding pages: The Red orders are at their best in ter summer with :d-flowered dahlias, cannas, ılvia species, verbenas, oribunda roses, shrubs ith purple or coppery ›liage including forms of lum, berberis, Norway ıaples, and hazel, set off by ark blue and purple elphiniums and monkshood. *)pposite:* Part of the wild arden that follows the ream where huge groups f perennials such as skunk abbage and hosta grow in pparently natural abandon.

Above, clockwise from top left: Softly colored borders in the Old Garden end at a cedar of Lebanon near the house. Hedges at Hidcote often combine more than one plant: two hollies, yew, box, and copper beech create a tapestry in the Fuchsia Garden. The Stilt Garden, two open boxes of clipped hornbeams, bare-trunked to head height, rises above the Terrace Garden, which contains a variety of Alpine and allied plants. Artistry in brickwork is the key to Mrs. Winthrop's Garden, where the planting is dominated by blue and yellow flowers.

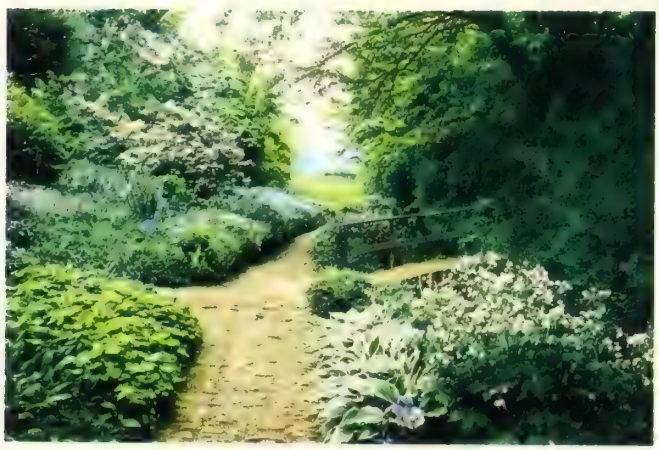
the head of the "T," known as the Theatre Lawn. Four hornbeams near the entrances screen a wide sward entirely enclosed in a tall yew hedge. At the far end the hedge is semicircular and frames a raised round stage, grassed and filled with bulb flowers in spring. Huge beeches probably two centuries old overshadow it.

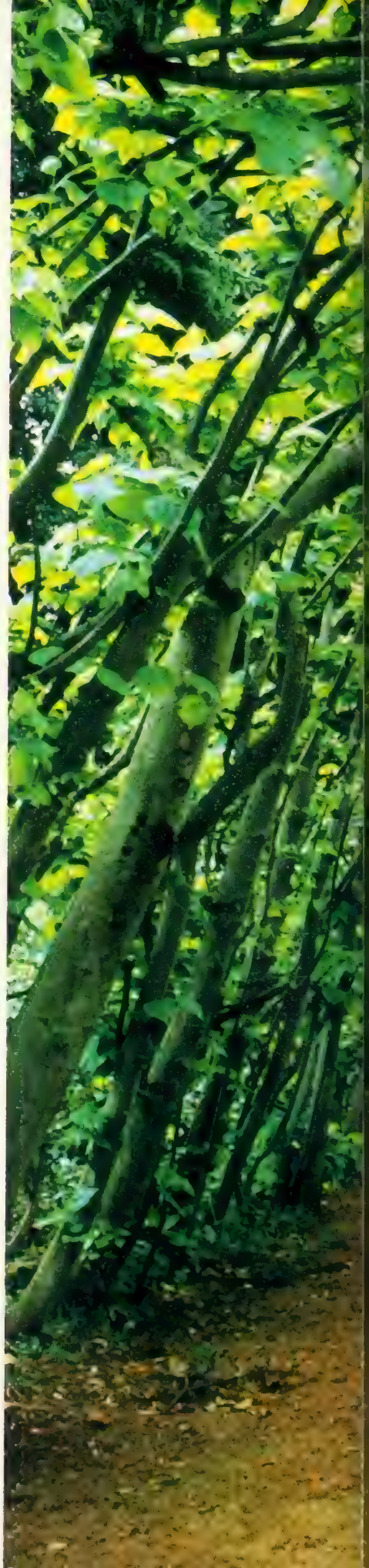
The garden's effective main axis is parallel with the Theatre Lawn and shares its southern hedge. Part of this long vista comprises a wide grass walk between plant borders, called the Red Borders, at their best in later summer and the strongest color effect in the whole garden.

The grass walk ends one way in a flight of stone steps, and the borders are terminated on the higher level by two elegant little pavilions or gazebos slightly Chinese in feeling, of red brick with gray-gold tiles. Climb the steps and a very unusual piece of gardening is before one: two solid oblong "boxes" of foliage on trunks. This is the Stilt Garden, composed of hornbeams, two rows on either side, clipped like aerial hedges and exposing their bare trunks to head height, a conceit deriving from *(Continued on page 202)*

However long you linger in Hidcote you are never sure you have seen it all; only visits at different seasons reveal all the choice plants







Above top: A pair of brick pavilions with uptilted eaves, one behind the other at the head of the Long Walk, a wide grass patch flanked by strictly clipped hornbeams. Like everything else in the garden, they were designed by Lawrence Johnston. *Above:* A stone path that follows the stream in one of the informal parts of Hidcote offers a glimpse of the countryside beyond. *Right:* A tunnel of trained limes next to Mrs. Winthrop's Garden creates a welcome cool green shade for hot summer days.









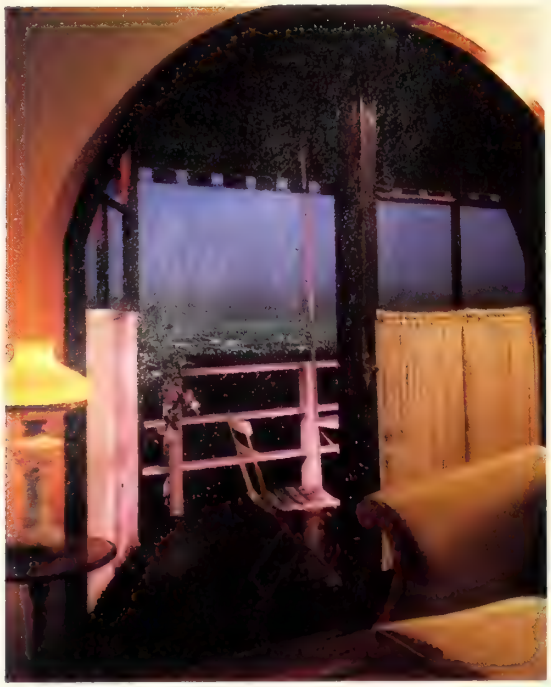
Joan Hackett at home

BEVERLY HILLTOP

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID GLOMB

When actress Joan Hackett remodeled her house on a hill in California, she wanted "things not to look entirely completed. Line is the truth of things, and it's best seen against white." In the large room that encompasses the downstairs, cool matte-white walls play up the warmth of highly polished wood. The arches of new French doors and the curves of the fireplace, dining table, and chairs offset the straight lines of beams and bookshelves. Antique furniture collected over the years stands out as assuredly as art, thanks to the sparse arrangement and—a stroke of bravura—lacquer-bright wood finishes uncharacteristic of furniture of the period. To Joan, antiques are presences worthy of reverence: "The man who made the dining table over 200 years ago is somehow with us in that table. I touch it whenever I pass." Work areas in the house provide pockets of reassuring clutter. A case in point: the desk with books, papers, a watercolor Joan painted. "For me, to be at home, to cook, to entertain are luxuries. I really delight in making an atmosphere that will charm people. When I act, I must meld my talents with many people's, but at home it's my set, my movie." □ *By Margaret Morse*

Left: The lofty living and dining room gleams with new wide-plank flooring, which Joan stained "a ruddy Irish-setter brown" and sealed with glossy polyurethane. The one island of color: the carnation-patterned Portuguese needlepoint rug that interior designer Sharon Sistine ordered from Stark Carpet.









Above, clockwise from top left: By the long windswept porch, crisp batiste curtains and the friendly aura of pink electric lighting put the panoramic view of Los Angeles in perspective. New stairs to the front hall run nearly the length of the living and dining area and take a curve below the kitchen—during parties, the steps serve as extra seats; beyond, the English breakfront holds white French porcelain, old brass oil lamps. In the bathroom, shirred striped sheeting and a meticulously arranged still life of makeup containers. The early-bentwood bed, dressed in Porthault flowers, in the charming "unmade" European manner. *Opposite:* The galley-sized kitchen has a cozy treehouse vantage on the big room below. Joan had a wall opened up to make a serving pass-through and table for two. Hinged on one side, it's also the kitchen's second entrance. Coffee-cup chandelier was a silent film star's whimsy Joan and a friend came upon in a shop, and they flipped a coin to see who'd get to buy it.





Left: Second-floor gallery surrounding the central two-story atrium. Moldings make piers seem as though they were carved from a continuous wall. Flooring is polished black terrazzo interspersed with small tiles. Framed in opening at right rear is small-scale model of Raymond Kaskey's sculpture *Portlandia,* an allegorical symbol of the city, to be placed over the main entrance.

THE GALLANT GAMBLE OF MICHAEL GRAVES

BY MARTIN FILLER

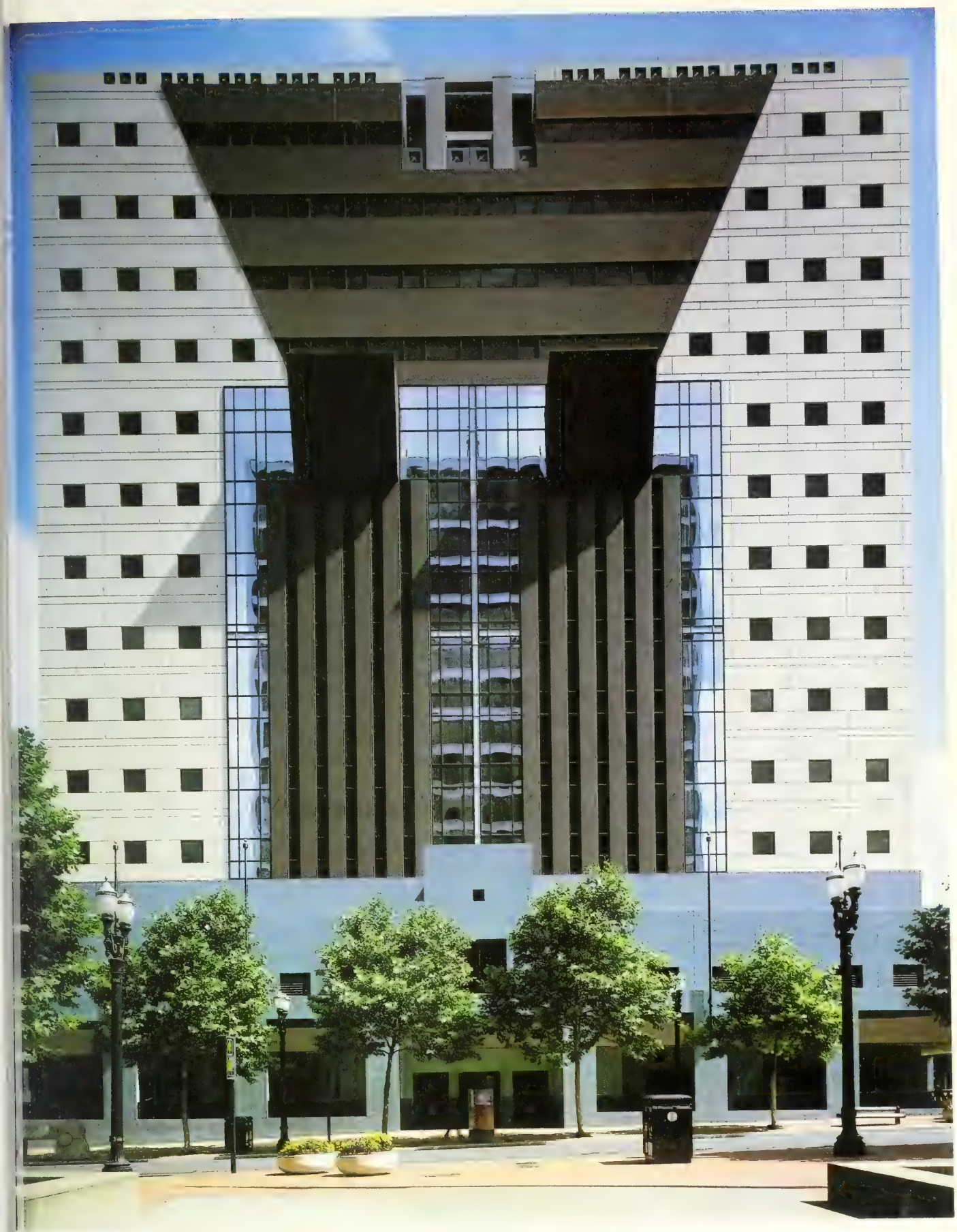
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER AARON

It's a rare thing for a young American architect to be featured in the pages of *People,* to be mobbed by autograph seekers at the dedication of a building he designed, and to be interviewed on *The NBC Nightly News*. And it's equally rare for a work of American architecture to arouse the extremes of critical reaction that the new Portland Building by Michael Graves has provoked. It has already been hailed by architecture critic Vincent Scully as "mythic" and denounced by the architecture critic of *Time,* Wolf Von Eckardt, as "dangerous." (To paraphrase an old German aphorism, "Whenever I hear a work of art called 'dangerous,' I reach for my palette knife.") Actually, The Portland Building is neither a talisman nor a threat. Rather, it is an interesting, somewhat flawed, and thoroughly well-intentioned attempt to chart a new course for high-rise architecture. And although this building is only partially successful in doing so, its importance goes far beyond its being the first large-scale structure to be completed in the controversial Post Modern Classical style.



Stylized garland on side exterior

Although Graves has become a cynosure of both the popular and the professional press during the past few years, it's still highly unusual for an architect of his innovative outlook to be awarded a major governmental commission. Private clients are often willing to take risks for the sake of art, but elected officials answerable to the public rarely follow suit. Why, then, did the city fathers of Portland choose Graves to design their new municipal office building? His design team was one of three finalists chosen from a field of 11 in a limited competition judged by a panel that included Philip Johnson, the dean of American architects and an enthusiastic supporter of Graves's work. Much has been made of Johnson's strong electioneering on behalf of the Graves design, but ultimately the awarding of the job to Graves had more to do with the fact that his proposal, alone among the three finalists, met the city's limited budget. Furthermore, it was energy-efficient, promising greater long-term savings. In this age of lowered expectations, it is remarkable not only that a high-style architect was chosen, but also that an artist could produce a *(Continued on page 215)*



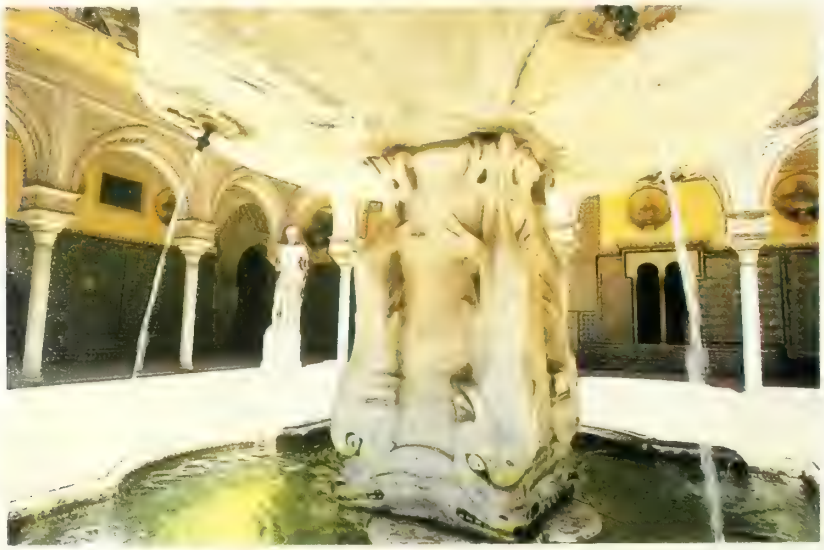
Facade of The Portland Building, a new municipal office building designed for the Oregon city by architect Michael Graves



A HISTORY IN STONE

BY VICENTE LLÉO CAÑAL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY HORST

The Casa de Pilatos in Seville, home of the Duke and Duchess of Medinaceli and their family, condenses five centuries of Spanish art into its treasure-filled rooms



Top: The main patio—a more enchanting blend of Gothic, Moorish, and the Renaissance can hardly be imagined. *Above:* In one corner, a fountain supported by dolphins and crowned by a double-headed Janus is watched over by busts of Roman emperors. *Opposite:* The Duke and Duchess of Feria—he is the second son of the Medinacelis—and their sons in the Small Garden.



Young Velázquez probably walked along the cool patios of the Casa de Pilatos with his teacher, and later father-in-law, Francisco Pacheco, who painted some of its ceilings. The ashes of that *optimus princeps,* the Emperor Trajan, born in nearby Italica, were once revered inside a lead urn in the library. And in the mid 19th century, that arch-romantic, the English traveler Richard Ford, sighed in grief at the then-sorry state of the magnificent mansion. Like a magnet, this palace in Seville owned by the Dukes of Medinaceli has attracted the attention of those partial to that charming hybrid of East and West: *mudéjar* art. The word needs some explaining. Originally mudéjar was the name given to the Moslems who remained in territories reconquered by the Christian kings, mostly small farmers and craftsmen. Among the latter were the highly skilled carpenters and masons who had built the dream palaces of the last Moslem rulers of Spain. The new ruling class of Christian knights soon succumbed to the charms of eastern lifestyles, just as the Crusaders had done in the Holy Land. Damp, harsh castles gave way to new urban residences, airy and luminous, with flower-filled patios and brightly tiled halls. And successive European art styles—Gothic, Renaissance, even Baroque—were adapted to suit the special abilities and techniques of mudéjar craftsmen. The success of the formula—European vocabulary given an eastern accent—was astonishing, and through the routes of the Spanish Empire it even reached the American shores.

The Casa de Pilatos is undoubtedly the most singular monument of Andalusian mudéjar art. Added to and enriched along the centuries, but also suffering long periods of extreme neglect, this seemingly fragile structure of marble, giltwood, and stucco has somehow managed to survive. Now, recent and intensive restoration has brought it back to its original splendor.

The origins of the palace are appropriately dramatic. In the year 1481, Don Pedro Enriquez, *Adelantado Mayor* (a kind of military governor in what was still a frontier region with the Arab kingdom of Granada), bought a small palace whose owner had been condemned as a heretic by the Inquisition and whose property was auctioned off by the Inquisitors. According to the legal deeds the property was small, yet the price it fetched was high. The reason was simple: the house possessed its own supply of water, a rarity in medieval Seville.

There was, though, a problem: the small size of the house. It occupied just a small chunk of an irregular block

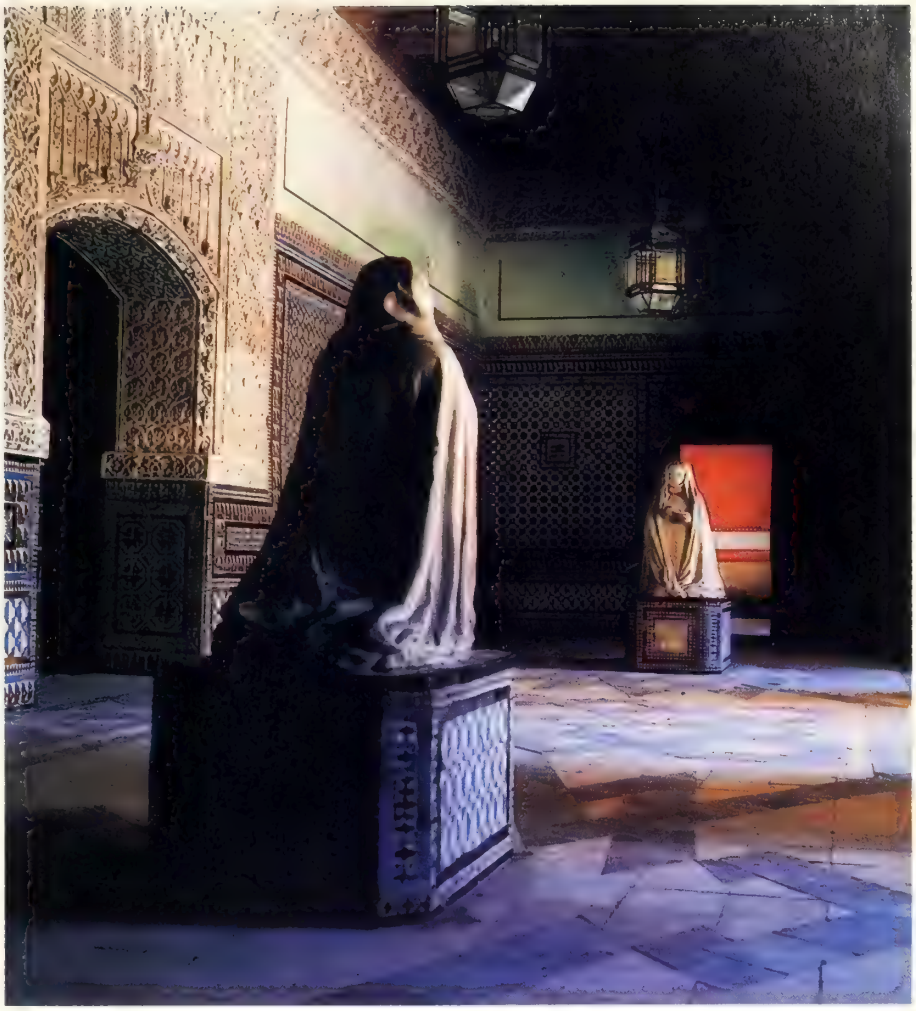


Right: A magnificent carpet in the style of Charles IV, the Spanish Empire style, manufactured by the royal tapestry factory, Real Fàbrica de Tapices, covers the floor of a reception room at the core of the house. Between the doors that open into the state dining room hangs a family portrait of the Marquis of Aytona by Gaspar de Crayer, a disciple of Rubens.





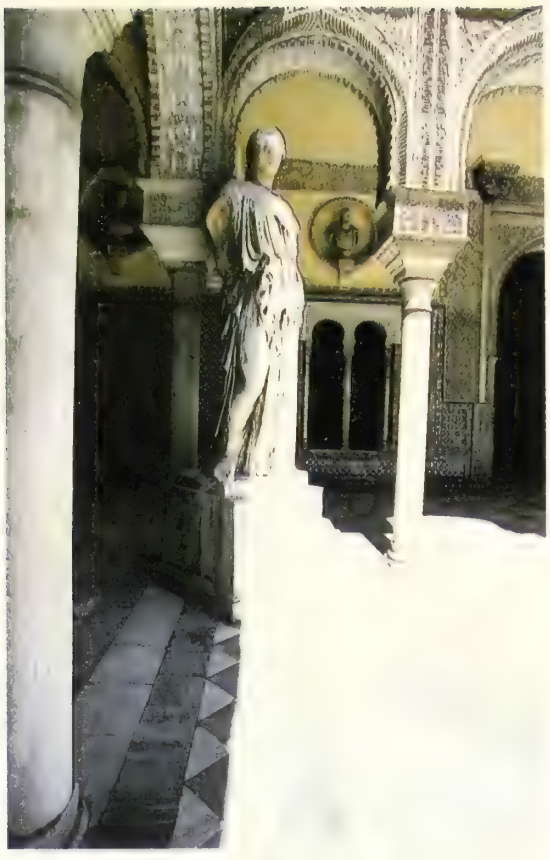
Left: The walls of the grand staircase are a museum of 16th-century Sevillian tiles set in imitation of wall hangings with borders, grounds, and family crests: an immovable version of the tapestries with which medieval nobles furnished their walls. The coffered wooden ceiling shows traces of gilding. *Right:* Sixteenth-century praying figures rescued from a destroyed church flank the approach to the chapel. Plasterwork with Gothic organization and Islamic motifs covers the entrance and the inscription over the door is in Arabic.



and thus it hardly befitted the dignity of the Adelantado. During the next 50 years the family kept buying the neighboring houses and adding them on to the palace, first Don Pedro, then his enormously wealthy widow Doña Catalina, finally their son. By the 1530s the property reached its final limits only to lose a small part in the late 19th century.

Very little remains of the parts built by the Adelantado Don Pedro. Traditionally, the chapel, with its hybrid Gothic Moorish arches and ribs, is assigned to his times and it certainly lies close to the original nucleus of the house. Whatever else he may have built was probably remodeled by his son Don Fadrique, First Marquis of Tarifa, who gave a large part of the house its present appearance. Don Fadrique was an extraordinary man, always more attracted to letters than to warfare, and one of the first great lords of the Renaissance in Spain. Cultured, well traveled, a true humanist, he still retained certain medieval attitudes and an almost mystical reverence for religious things. In 1518 he undertook a pilgrimage to the Holy Land accompanied by the poet Juan del Encina (who later wrote an account of the trip in verse) and *(Continued on page 178)*





Left: The ceiling of the state dining room is 16th-century mudéjar; the walls are hung with tapestries by David Teniers, family portraits, and a still life by Giuseppe Recco. *Above:* One of the finest Greek statues in Spain: an Athena by a pupil of Phidias, 4th century B.C. *Below:* French furniture including a signed Jacob desk, paintings by Goya and his circle in a small drawing room. Strapwork design of the ceiling is by 17th-century architect Juan de Oviedo.



most curiously, 12 chosen manservants with whom he entered Jerusalem, maybe as some odd allusion to the Lord and His Disciples. All during his trip, Don Fadrique kept a diary that informs us of his progress through Italy. He was a guest of the Medici at Florence and stayed at their lovely villa of Poggio a Caiano; in Rome he saw the fabulous funeral services held in honor of Raphael and was given audience by the Pope in the frescoed *Stanza della Segnatura;* in Pavía he was delighted by that masterpiece of Lombardic ornamentation, the *Certosa.* So impressed was Don Fadrique by the achievements of Italian Renaissance art, then at its climax, that, on his return from the Holy Land, he ordered from the Genoese sculptors of the *Certosa de Pavía* two splendid marble sepulchers for his parents.

Back in Seville and clearly under the influence of the magnificent Italian *palazzi* he had seen, Don Fadrique embarked on an ambitious building program that was to last until his death in 1539. More consignments from Genoa brought a wealth of Carrara marble in the form of columns, fountains, and a monumental gateway shaped as an

Right: Beneath a 16th-century ceiling painted with mythological subjects, a late 19th-century Sèvres mantel and garniture are flanked by views of the Bay of Naples by Vanvitelli.
Below: Still largely unexplored, the archives—the most important in Spain in private hands—contain family documents from the 11th century on, letters from Rubens and Richelieu, and genealogical manuscripts covering all of Spain and part of France.

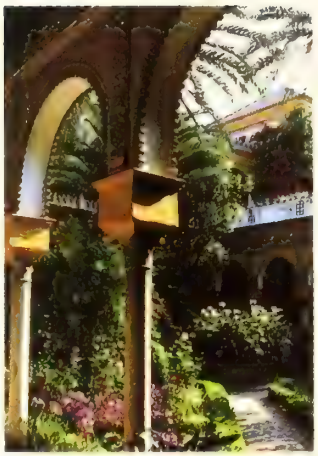


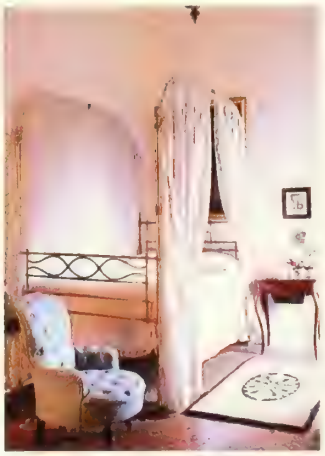




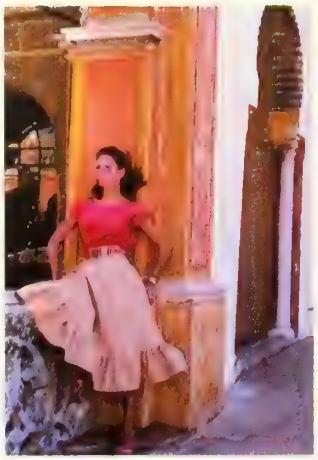
arch of triumph. In the hands of the mudéjar craftsmen, however, such pieces lost much of the intellectual severity of the Italian Renaissance. They were distributed in a rather haphazard fashion—no two arches in the main patio, for instance, have the same dimensions. But they gained enormously in picturesque, sensuous values. In the main patio Italian columns support arches covered in minute stucco decoration of Arabic ancestry and these in turn support a balustrade of Gothic tracery.

To provide necessary coolness for the long summer afternoons, the walls of the ground-floor halls were covered in multicolored tiles with the family crest in the middle of each panel. Used mainly during the winter, the upper floor













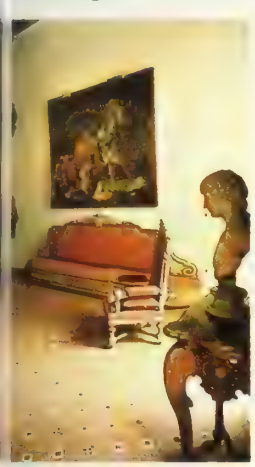


Top row: A small flower-filled patio. Lace-hung Victorian bed in a guest room. The face of Athena. Scene from *Gerusalemme Liberata* by Luca Giordano in one of the archive rooms, with a staircase leading to apartment of the Duke of Segorbe, youngest son of the Duke of Medinaceli. Gallery with copies of Pacheco frescoes added during the filming of *Lawrence of Arabia* in the palace. Bedroom in the attic apartment of the Duke of Segorbe. *Middle row:* The Duchess of Feria in one of the upper galleries. Wrought-iron window grilles display crest of the Spanish royal family. Sixteenth-century loggia designed to show off part of the archaeological collection. Victorian sitting room. Detail of panel showing *cuenca* tiles. *Bottom row:* Stair tower with the family arm rises above bougainvillaea-hung courtyard. Small garden pavilion with some of the archaeological collection. A typical Andalusian mudéjar ceiling. The oldest doors in the palace—late 15th century—still retain traces of their original polychrome. *Overleaf:* One of the loggias overlooking the big garden built by the Italian architect Tortello in 1570.

ived different decoration: the gallery was painted in
co with portraits of literary and humanistic worthies;
a vast hall overlooking the garden was also frescoed
1 the Triumphs of the Seasons, a gay procession with all
characters of classical mythology.

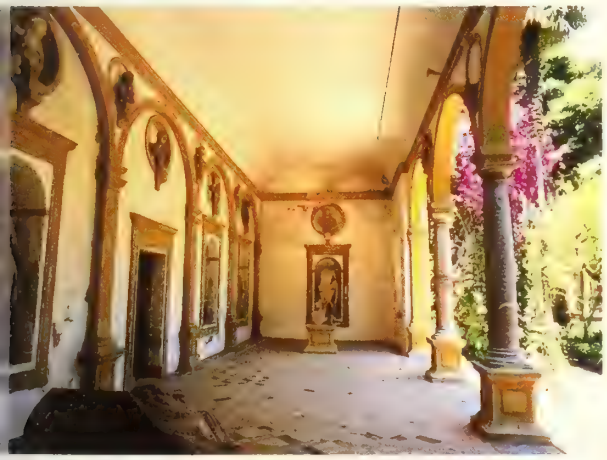
he effect of these innovations on local architecture was
antaneous. Some of the pieces ordered by Don Fadri-
happened to be seen, still unfinished in the Genoese
kshop, by another distinguished resident of Seville, the
ed bibliophile Don Fernando Colón, son of Christo-
r Columbus. He immediately ordered new pieces for
house he was having built. Such a craze for Italian mar-
developed with nobles and ecclesiastics in competition that columns exported from Italy to Seville were made without entasis, that gentle swelling of the shaft, so they could be packed tighter in the ships!

The Casa de Pilatos owes its odd name as well as its form to Don Fadrique's pilgrimage. On his return from Jerusalem he found that the distance from his house to a Calvary built a few years earlier on the outskirts of Seville approximated that of the true Way of the Cross he had seen in the Holy City. Struck by the coincidence he founded a devotional Way of the Cross with all the holy stations duly marked. Since the first station is Jesus shown to the people at Pilate's palace it is hardly surprising that popular imagination identified the house of *(Continued on page 212)*























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JOURNAL

Events of exceptional interest in the arts, design, entertainment, and living

'HE EVOLVING MASTERY)F DAVID SMITH

Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, through Jan. 2; National Gallery of Art, Washington, through Apr. 24; an Antonio Museum of Art, Mar. 27–June 4.

Among the pleasures that retrospectives offer is the comforting discovery that artists are not born great. To see a career in all stages of its development is to begin to understand what it takes to make raw talent into genius. Many factors influence this process, but one trait keeps reappearing throughout the history of art: In the alchemy that transforms promise into achievement, a key ingredient is the ability to handle contradictions and transcend limitations, the artist's own and those of his time and place.

When David Smith began his career during the late 1920s and early '30s, he was distinctly limited by the absence of modern American sculptors to serve as examples and, perhaps, mentors. Most sculptors living in the United States at this time were still carving stone and wood or modeling clay. And if abstraction had begun to penetrate the consciousness of American painters, the same was not true of those artists working in three dimensions, who relied on the human form for inspiration. The exceptions, like Alexander Calder, were based in France, enjoying a climate more supportive of modernity.

But David Smith's ambition prevented him from being satisfied with life as a provincial sculptor, and his thoroughly American spirit kept him from becoming an expatriate. This exhibition—the first showing of the full spectrum of his work since his studio in Bolton Landing, New York, was dismantled after his death in 1965—is vivid evidence that despite limits placed on him by the circumstances of his life and the nature of sculpture, and even with his large-scale ambition, Smith's reach did not exceed his grasp.

Born in 1906 in Decatur, Indiana, Smith was raised among farmers and laborers, and his roots in the Midwestern working class would remain an important influence on his art. When he arrived in New York in 1926 and began to study at the Art Students League, Smith had intended to establish himself as a painter. Consequently, his courses all concentrated on two-dimensional modes of expression. Smith never did receive any formal training in sculpture and, paradoxically, the absence of academic experience in this area freed Smith from exposure to the conservative notions that prevailed in American art circles at that time. His sources were the limited means he had at hand—foreign texts and art magazines and his own life experiences. The latter consisted chiefly of his

(Continued on next page)



David Smith at home in Bolton Landing, New York, two weeks before his death in 1965.



Smith's *Cubi XII*, 1963

ON LOCATION AT THE HOMES OF "THE MAN OF THE CENTURY"



The latest endeavor to bring Britain's great statesman to life begins January 16 on PBS. *Winston Churchill: The Wilderness Years* is an eight-part series covering the loneliest period of his life, from 1929 to 1939. Filming at Chartwell and Blenheim caused series star Robert Hardy to remark that "his atmosphere still lingers." *Above:* Churchill (Hardy) and his cousin "Sunny," the Duke of Marlborough (David Markham), walk the grounds of Blenheim Palace. Sian Phillips co-stars as Clementine Churchill. *Gabrielle Winkel*

associations in the New York art community, a trip abroad in 1935, and his work as logger, cab driver, oiler, and as a welder in a Studebaker factory.



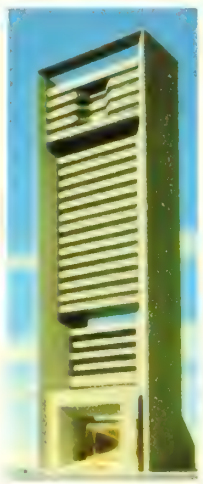
Cockfight Variation II, c. 1945

Smith learned much from the illustrations of Picasso's work and those of another Spanish artist, Julio Gonzalez, in the pages of *Cahier d'Art.* In a sense, their welded metal sculpture, like three-dimensional drawing, gave Smith permission to take the technical skills acquired as a laborer and apply them in a fine-art context. The expansion of Smith's creative concerns from painting to sculpture now seems an obvious consequence of the artist's temperament.

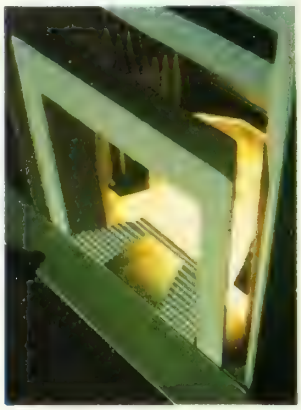
But Smith's decision to work in three dimensions did not mean he abandoned other forms. Indeed, the range of materials and techniques in this exhibit is remarkable. Smith's lithographs, etchings, drawings, and oils are placed amid his work in bronze, silver, iron, and steel. And since the lessons of the Cubists' collage and the Surrealists' found object were not lost on him, Smith even made sculpture by welding farm tools and, in another instance, tank boiler caps to steel.

The years after Smith moved from New York to his farm at Bolton Landing seem to have been a creative maelstrom. The exhibit reveals a method of working whereby Smith seized on a subject or motif—birds, landscapes, circles, cubes, and so often in the later years, the human form standing alone against the horizon—and worked through dozens of variations on the idea, alone or in combination with other themes, through the full sweep of available media. He didn't edit his enormous output, and, as a result of this, the quality is not consistent. But even the flawed pieces evidence his heroic wrestling with the limitations of his life and work: European modernism and the American cultural identity, working-class upbringing and a life lived for high art, mental versus physical labor, two dimensions versus three, man versus nature. His achievement is the result of blending opposing forces. A friend, the painter Robert Motherwell, understood this when he wrote, "Oh David, you are as delicate as Vivaldi, and as strong as a Mack truck." □ *Mary Ann Tighe*

FOLK ART MUSEUM'S STRIKING NEW TOWER



The striking design for a new gallery and office tower for the Museum of American Folk Art in New York is an important step forward both for that institution and its architect, Emilio Ambasz. One of the most interesting designers of his generation, the 40-year-old



Ambasz has planned for below-street-level exhibition space topped by a 26-story income-producing office tower. The $40-million project will be built on West 53rd Street, a stone's throw from the Museum of Modern Art (where Ambasz was once curator of design). Though approval of the final scheme is still pending, it promises to be an eagerly awaited endeavor. □ *Martin Filler*

THE DELICATE DOMESTIC ART OF CARL LARSSON

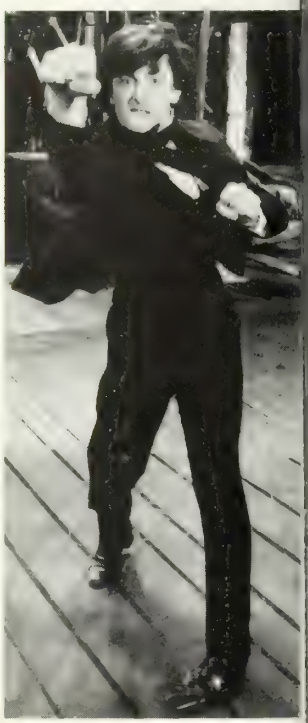


One of Sweden's most beloved artists, Carl Larsson (1853–1919), now receives his first American exhibition through January 30 at the Brooklyn Museum. His charming illustrations (often of interiors), typified by *In the Corner,* c. 1895, mix folk-art simplicity, Swedish straightforwardness, and Art Nouveau sophistication. *M.F.*

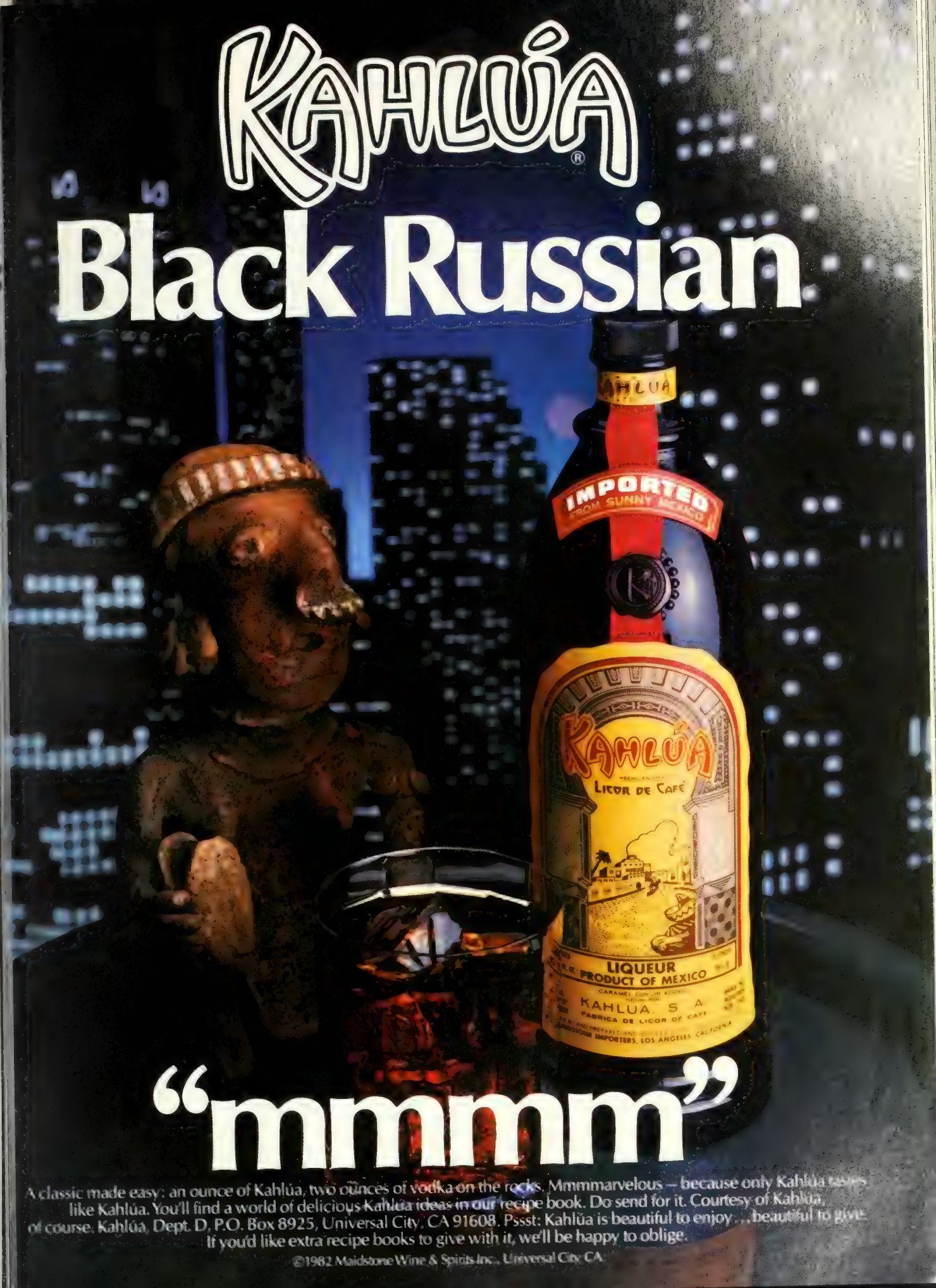
NICKLEBY A KNOCKOUT ON THE HOME SCREEN

Those watching Charles Dickens's *Nicholas Nickleby* on the Mobil Showcase Network will see a unique

(Continued on page 188)



Roger Rees as Nickleby



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(Continued from page 186) combina tion of theater and TV. The Roya Shakespeare Company's productio made theatrical history with its lengt of eight hours and cast of 39 perform ing 150 parts. With much of the origi nal cast, it is a must-see. Begins Januar 10 over four evenings. □ *G.W.*

THE STAR AS ACTOR:
THE NEW PAUL NEWMAN



Newman and Rampling in *The Verdict*

Now and then in movies a great acto has the good fortune to become a great star as well. In America, Walter Hus ton, Fredric March, and Robert De Niro are examples of this happy fate. What is more unusual, and considera bly more exciting and moving, is the phenomenon of a star becoming a great actor. It is rare because stars fre quently become trapped in their own myths. An embodiment of common dreams, hopes, desires, stars draw us into the elaboration of their own self created image from movie to movie; some of the greatest stars, like John Wayne, have been so lovable because they were essentially conservative craftsmen, deepening but never alter ing the characters they presented to the camera. They remain in our minds as powerful images, complexes of emo tional, moral, and erotic attitudes that we refer to and depend on. So when a star ceases to be a myth, and becomes instead an actor, drawing us into the mysteries and terrors of personality, a havoc is wrought in our feelings about him.

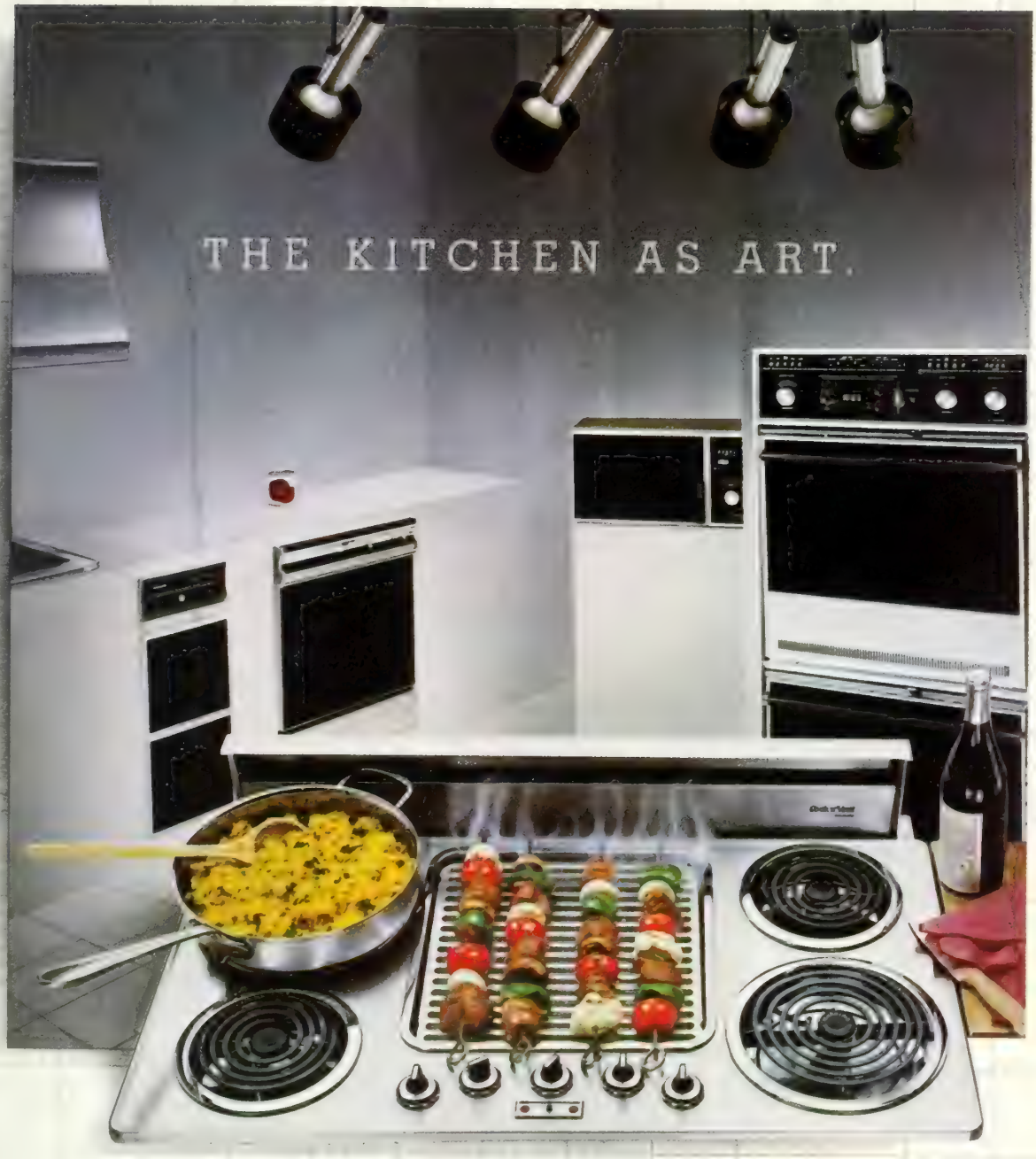
And such is the case with Paul New man, who has been a star for almost three decades. In the last few years, in such movies as *Slap Shot* and *Fort Apache, The Bronx,* Newman has be gun to remake himself, taking on hard er and harder *(Continued on page 192)*

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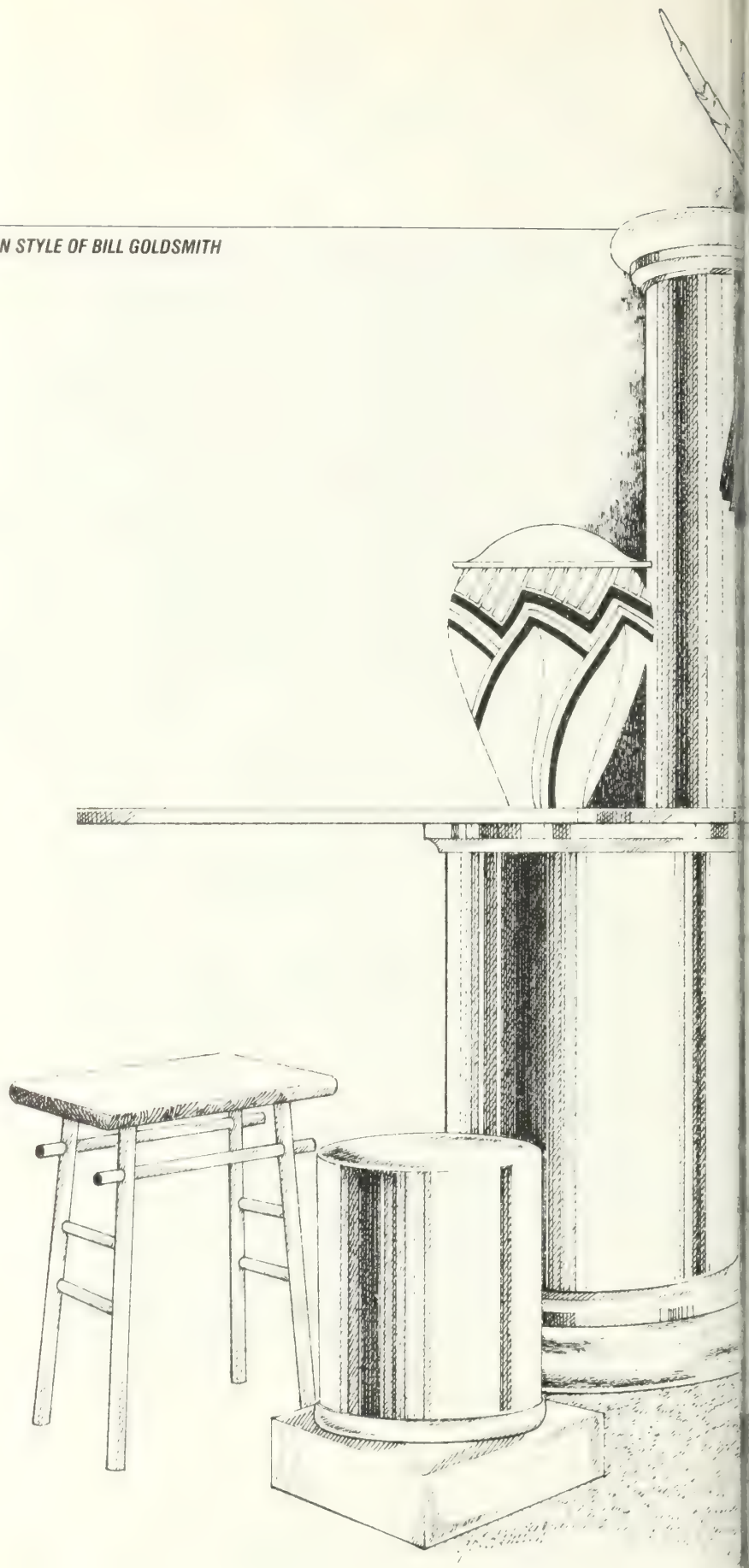
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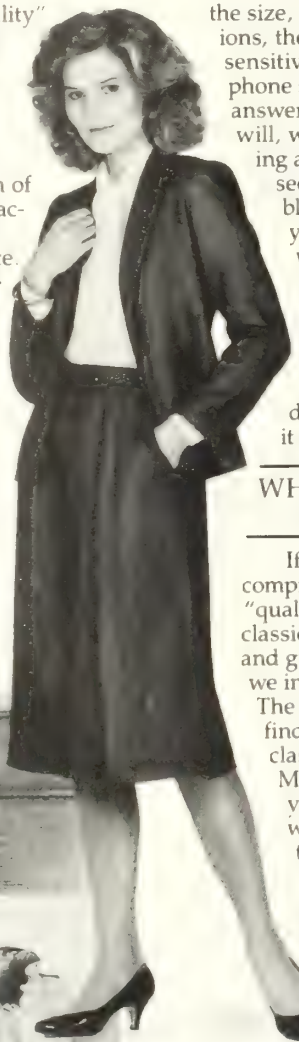


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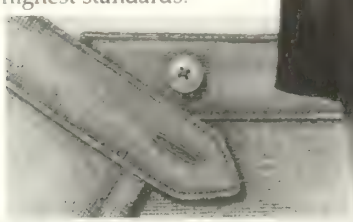
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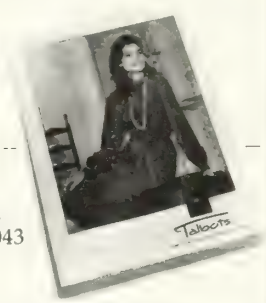
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(Continued from page 188) roles, using his face and body in startling new ways. And now Newman has given his most moving performance yet. In Sidney Lumet's *The Verdict,* an excellent drama of lawyers and corruption set in Boston, Newman plays a fine attorney, Frank Galvin, who has suffered reversals and betrayal in his career and has degenerated into an alcoholic ambulance chaser. He actually presents his card to distraught widows, hoping to gain employment. Galvin's life is a seamy texture of lies, evasions, dereliction. He works in a slovenly office, tells stale jokes at the local bar, runs away from his clients. He has gone past cynicism about the law; he is like a priest who has lost his faith—the spirit of the law is not present in him, and so he cannot even work for a living, much less fight for justice. His silver hair shaggy and long, his features oddly off-kilter, Newman has been photographed for the first time in a way that shows his age (he is 57). He takes us very deep into the anguish of this grifter, and the effect is deeply disturbing. For if Paul Newman can slide into Nowhere, then any of us could too.

Lumet, working with a screenplay by playwright David Mamet, who in turn adapted Barry Reed's novel, has a very good story to tell. Galvin is given a case by an old lawyer friend (Jack Warden) who is still fond of him—an open-and-shut instance of medical malpractice in which two renowned doctors at a Boston hospital run by the archdiocese have given a woman in delivery the wrong anesthesia, sending her into a coma. Four years later, she is neither dead nor alive, but permanently comatose. The archdiocese, eager to protect the reputation of its hospital, wants to settle out of court a claim filed by the woman's family, but Galvin, outraged by the archdiocese's arrogance, takes the case to trial, suing for much greater damages. He is also suing, of course, for his own redemption, his own readmittance into faith in the law.

The story develops slowly, with much detail, all of it interesting, and many surprising little twists and turns. Mamet works with great economy—the dialogue has pungency and boldness and a refreshing absence of rhetoric in all but a few suitable big moments. *(Continued on page 195)*

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Continued from page 192) Even Sidney Lumet, normally the most ebullient and slovenly of directors, works in a chastened, disciplined manner. As in Lumet's last good film, *Prince of the City,* a challenging theme emerges—the state of compromise and moral confusion that govern so many of our dealings with big institutions and power, and the possibility (the *necessity*) of taking moral action even though one is oneself thoroughly compromised.

Galvin's redemption does not happen overnight. There are many moments of backsliding and panic, many betrayals, much malice from people who would rather see him down and out. Newman takes us into dismaying areas of indecision and fatigue and near-nausea that we have all experienced. He goes right down to the butt ends of his soul and then renews himself. When you've seen this movie, you have not only experienced Newman in a new way, you have experienced yourself in a new way. And perhaps only an actor who is also a great star can do that to us. □ *David Denby*

VERDI'S "BALLO": SUBTLE, TERSE AND PASSIONATE

On March 16, 1792, during a masked ball at the Stockholm Opera, King Gustavus III of Sweden was fatally shot by a member of his court. A brilliant if despotic ruler, Gustavus had during his 21-year reign turned Stockholm from provincial capital into a glittering cultural center. And even though political assassinations in his time were as prevalent as they are in ours, the tragic fate of Gustavus against the brilliance of its setting held out a particular public fascination.

In the ensuing decades, no fewer than four operas appeared retelling the murder of Gustavus. All of them were based to some extent on a libretto by the aptly named prolific Frenchman Eugène Scribe, who had used the central episode as a peg for his own fanciful fiction: Gustavus in love with the wife of his assassin, the guilty love publicly and humiliatingly revealed, the murder the fulfillment of a prophecy by a sorceress. Of all these operas, none holds the stage today except for the last and undoubtedly finest, *Un Ballo in Maschera* by Giuseppe Verdi. This work of Verdi's maturity is not his best-known opera, nor the most accessible. It does not immediately embrace us in rich, flowing tunes, as do *Rigoletto* or *La Traviata.* Yet, if I were asked to name the one of Verdi's operas closest to perfection, it would be *Ballo.*

Opera is not merely a play with music, nor is it a piece of music merely stuck onto a play. When it works as an art form, as it does in the hands of its greatest creators, it is an art that transcends the sum of all its parts. In the greatest operas music and drama accomplish together what neither can do by itself. Here, to prove the point, is one moment from Verdi's *Ballo.* It is late in the opera. Renato, the wronged husband and assassin-to-be, exults



Final scene of Act III as Gustavus falls dead

with two conspirators about their forthcoming triumph; his wife, the tormented Amelia, laments her lot; over it all, the courtly page Oscar (a role sung by a coloratura soprano, preferably diminutive) babbles on about the evening's festivities, a "ballo in maschera splendidissimo" to which he has, in all innocence, invited all these people. If this were a play, each of the characters would be obliged to speak his or her lines in turn. But it is music, and therefore Verdi can overcome time, compress the action by creating melodic lines for each individual that can be sung simultaneously.

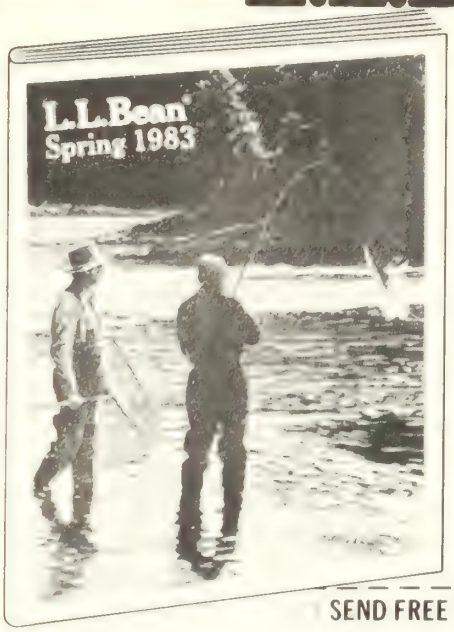
And so we have Renato and his cohorts sounding their gruff, menacing exultations while Amelia, in her sad, slow, lyric line, turns the music toward the melancholic strain of the minor mode; over all this, like a trail of stardust ironically affixed, is the happy chirping of Oscar. The effect of these several emotions, flung together and made to adhere by the genius of Verdi's music, must be overwhelming; if it isn't, the performance has failed. *Ballo* is full of these effects. In the way Verdi compresses the time-span of action through the kind of ensemble writing I've described, the opera seems to pass by with terrifying speed.

There are other kinds of marvelous touches. In his early operas, the young Verdi tended to use the orchestra as little more than mere accompaniment to the singers, a kind of glorified guitar. But in *Ballo* the orchestra comes into its own; its own vast repertory of sounds becomes an important part of the drama. Act Two: Amelia has been advised by the sorceress to seek a healing herb at midnight, out in a field where a gallows stands. She comes to the place; the orchestra sets the spooky, dismal scene, and stabs of woodwind tone tell us of Amelia's torture. She sings her long, pathetic lament. When it comes time, according to our expectations of the usual form of Verdi's arias, for her to repeat her long, sad tune, she cannot; the fear, passion, and guilt have drained her of the power of speech. Instead, an English horn in the orchestra takes up her tune, almost like a prompter. Only then can the poor girl regain her composure.

Of all the great romantic operas that honor the art of the human voice and its power to delineate the passions of high drama, none does its work more poignantly than *Ballo.* It is a difficult piece, terse and subtle. To make the performance work, there has to be a conductor who is more than merely a beater of time; there must be singers on stage who are more than mere vocal show-offs. The ideal performance should be a kind of chamber music.

Of the several available recordings, I know of two that come close to that ideal. One is ancient, a restoration of a Metropolitan Opera broadcast from 1940, available through the Met's Opera Fund, in which the haunting, virtually seamless voice of the young Zinka Milanov weaves like a golden thread through the entire opera and the ardent artistry of Jussi Bjoerling adds further glory. Among more recent recordings, there is none to touch the performance under the tremendously eloquent leadership of Claudio Abaddo on Deutsche Grammophon, (2740 251), with Katia Ricciarelli and Placido Domingo as the tragic lovers. Both albums take the full measure of this indispensable opera. □ *Alan Rich*

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(*Continued from page 87*) bodies onto fourposters, where they like to recline on piles of cushions suitably embroidered with canine subjects.

The owners of the house bring the same artistry, the same sense of detail to bear on their garden. Since it will be the subject of a separate article, I will only mention the garden insofar as it impinges on the house. It's not just the smell of jasmine and nicotiana that wafts in from outdoors, or the stands of delphiniums and lilies—the owners' only concession to one-upmanship—that threaten to dwarf the house. It's the Lowestoft bowls crammed with roses or snapdragons—no fancy florists' arrangements, I assure you—and the pots of hyacinths or pelargoniums or sentry-like hollyhocks, which echo the many flower-pieces on the walls: the beautiful blowsy painting by Severin Rosen in the dining room or the set of 18th-century watercolors for Meissen porcelain and plates from *The Temple of Flora* that line upstairs passages.

Besides flowers, the owners have an evident passion for birds, as witness one of the country's finest private collections of Audubon, part of which is hung in the guest house. In theme, scale, and style, what could be more appropriate to the sturdy elegance of these rooms than Audubon's uncompromisingly monumental plates?

The swagger that characterizes this house is not any more typical of this century than it is of this country. "What I imagine a country house in 19th-century Russia to have been like," a frequent visitor says. I agree. The rooms have been decorated with such a bold touch, such disregard for "ghastly good taste," that you expect Tolstoy's characters to materialize: Princess Kitty or Princess Betsy reclining on a fringed or tasselled bergère, or Vronsky chalking his cue under the gigantic Charles X lighting fixture (one of Vincent Fourcade's brilliant finds) in the billiard room. And when you stand on the terrace and look out across the pots of agapanthus, you wonder whether that is not the Gulf of Finland glistening in the dusk. But the flapping of the stars and stripes way above you—yes, there is a flagpole of parade-ground height—brings you back to earth. You are in New England, all right, and when tennis is over, there will be brownies for tea. □

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CHAIRS WITH A DIFFERENCE

Decorators are grabbing up offbeat 19th-century furniture

By Louise Ade Boger

Collectors of antiques and, for that matter, decorative arts in general have always been preoccupied with the unusual. It harks back to the basic desire to express one's individual taste, rather than choose a piece that's archtypical of a particular period and that's practically indistinguishable from like pieces to be found at antiques shows and auctions throughout the world. In the case of chairs, their merely functional use must be couched in a framework that's pleasing to the eye, graceful, but with their own individual idiosyncracies to set them apart from the general run. They must, that is, impart their own charm or wit.



Mahogany chair of Russian origin with distinctive brass inlay.

Here are three cases in point—bought by prominent interior designers for their clients because they felt the chairs possessed a special distinction that would make them stand out and enhance the beauty of the room for which they were meant. They are all of 19th-century origin.

The mahogany chair with brass inlay, *above,* is unusual not only because of its distinctive design, but also because its dramatically curved sleigh back would tend to indicate that it is Russian in origin, even though it possesses an overall style characteristic of the English Regency period. The chair, which dates about 1805, was purchased by New York antiques dealer Tony Victoria at the 1982 New York Winter Antiques Show, and Chessy Rayner of the interior design firm Mac II bought it from him for one of her clients. Mrs. Rayner felt "it's an unusual chair . . . there aren't many like it around."

The backrest, for instance, avoids banality by the placement of the piquant diamond motif at its center. The lines are simple, saved from being too angular by the downcurved arms. And the French "tiger" velvet covering, unchanged by Mrs. Rayner's client, accentuates the exotic charm of this exceptional piece.

In the 19th century, many chairs were designed specifically for persons who were short in stature—chairs that echoed the grace and elegance of their larger counterparts. Many of these chairs are now bought as children's furniture and fit as easily into today's rooms as they did in their 19th-century counterparts.

The little chair, *below,* with its black-lacquered frame ornately decorated with intricate gold patterns is of early Victorian provenance. The graceful lines of the curving backrest, the sophistication of the black and gold decoration, and the contrast of the turned front legs with the splayed rear legs all combine to give this chair a subtle appeal.



Black-lacquered Victorian chair with gold design, cane back and seat.

It was bought for a client by eminent interior designer Mario Buatta. "I look for little chairs in all periods—18th century, 19th century. Just the other day I bought a little Portuguese chair. I like them because they look so nice in a room," he says. This small chair has the comfortable and inviting look suitable to a slipper chair, its castered legs suggesting that it could just as easily be drawn up to the fireside.



Chair for a child

Another small chair that Mr. Buatta selected for the use of a child, *right,* is believed to have been the handwork of a sailor. Made around 1850, it reflects the rococo trend of the American Empire period, which went far beyond its French prototypes in its abundant use of native motifs.

Mr. Buatta says "It's nice for a child to have something he can look to in a room, something he can feel comfortable in." And this chair is pretty sure to appeal to a child's fancy. The classic lines of shaped crest rail, downscrolled open arms and shaped legs have all been enhanced with an assortment of motifs according to the craftsman's individual whims. The crest rail contains curlicues of foliations centered by a shell, a motif repeated in the front rail. The upright members are boldly scrolled, the downswept arms end in leaf-scrolls which rest engagingly on the heads of little dogs. The legs end in paw feet, and these too are made to resemble the paws of a dog.

This miniature chair is a charmingly inventive example of American Folk Art, which has been increasing in popularity yearly among knowledgeable collectors and is very much in demand at sales across the country. □

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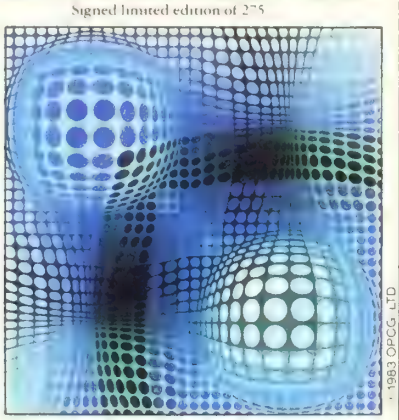
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(Continued from page 161) Renaissance Italy.

From the southern pavilion the upright of the "T" is revealed. What a contrast to the Red Borders: a wide grass walk between very tall hornbeam hedges, totally unplanted (though softened by large trees on either side), which dips down and then up again on each side of a bridge over the stream. This is terminated by handsome gates: what landscapers call a "vista closer."

One can edge round outside the gates, look over the fields, and wander into an area totally different—irregular grassy glades planted with choice trees and shrubs. It is called the Wilderness, or Westonbirt, after a famous arboretum, and forms an irregular oblong parallel with the Long Walk.

It is one measure of Lawrence Johnston's genius that he didn't treat the existing stream as the garden's main feature—which a plant-oriented designer might have done; nor does its direction link with that of either main axis. It has instead been made the basis, in the angles of the basic "T," of an irregular wild garden of changing character as it traverses one end of Westonbirt and continues beyond the Long Walk into fields.

One can then turn up a gentle slope with trees and shrubs that comes alive with flowers in spring, with bulbs, Lenten roses *(Helleborus orientalis)*, camassias, bellflowers, and periwinkles, opening eventually to a rough rocky bank largely covered with low shrubs and dwarf trees adapted to dry, exposed conditions. And behind one here, suddenly, is formality again in a totally different layout, where tall yew cones on square bases are aligned along borders, rectangles of lawn, and paths. The clipped trees remind one of early-18th-century French gardens, but unlike them the trees emerge from billows of informal plants.

This Pillar Garden is ensconced by the top of the Long Walk. Just across the Walk is another very formal enclosure totally enclosed by beech, hornbeam, and lime hedges. This is Mrs. Winthrop's Garden, made and named for Lawrence Johnston's mother and dominated by blue and yellow flowers. Within its rectangular boundaries is a round centerpiece of concentric circles of russet bricks. Three shallow, semicircular brick steps lead from the entrance down to the center, and the formation of these steps, the way they are shaped and rounded off, though hardly possible to explain in words, demonstrates Lawrence Johnston's great architectural artistry.

Immediately beside Mrs. Winthrop's Garden is an arched tunnel of trained limes; it has no real function except as a cool retreat where one could, like Andrew Marvell, indulge in a "green thought in a green shade." A little further along the border one can enter a positive maze of further "rooms" all enclosed in hedges. One is a tiny Fuchsia Garden, where four small box-edged beds filled with *Fuchsia magellanica* 'Variegata' form a quadrant in Tudor style and two topiary peacocks on stumpy cones frame an entrance in the hedge. Past them water shimmers and beyond it is a severe Classical portico in darkest yew. Steps down reveal a circular pool raised above path level by a dwarf sandstone wall. This was Major Johnston's bathing pool.

Nearer the house the main vista continues up to the final cedar through a whole series of oblong beds and walks known collectively as the Old Garden, and two further hedged enclosures, including the White Garden and the Maple Garden with several kinds of Japanese maple. Both enclosures have mixed yew and box hedges, which in later summer are astonishingly spangled with the scarlet Flame Flower, *Tropaeolum speciosum*.

The visitor, and the reader, may be exhausted, but the garden is not. To the far north side of the Theatre Lawn lies the Kitchen Garden, and the beautiful Old Rose Walk. This is an echo of the Pillar Garden but it is simpler and less architectural. Erect Irish yews stand up in the deep borders on either side among a planting that threatens to overwhelm them as the seasons pass. Spring bulbs give way to lilacs over peonies and lupins, while in early summer the display climaxes in a great variety of early-19th-century rose varieties and some species. Later, things calm down with daylilies, old fragrant sweet peas, and Japanese anemones. It is a marvelous example of a long-season border renewing itself with little untidiness from spring till fall.

I am conscious that I have mentioned few plants in this article. But plant lists would be endless, for each enclosure or informal planting has innumerable different kinds that moreover appear in succession through the year. Sufficient to say that many are unusual and all are the best of their kind—there is no second-rate here, though common plants may be used if they are "right." A number originated in the garden and bear the name Hidcote or, less often, Lawrence Johnston, who was a great plantsman and indeed collected as far away as China.

In the kinds of plants used Johnston was influenced by William Robinson's ideas of growing perfectly hardy plants quite naturally, which, by the turn of the century, had swept aside all Victorian formal bedding and had become a part of the national gardening subconscious. The streamside gardens are pure wild-style Robinson. But in his treatment of plants Johnston was an innovator. An early visitor said "This man is planting his garden as no one else has ever planted a garden." He allowed plants to mingle, especially with climbers reaching up into trees and even hedges; he made them look as though they had seeded themselves naturally, never as if deliberately planted. But color, form, texture are all deliberately considered: the artistry is akin to that of an interior decorator's.

It is fascinating to realize that there was probably never a blueprint; although the axes of the main "T" are accurately laid down, a study of the plan shows that other features are not at right angles to them and many of the enclosures are not symmetrical. But one is not conscious of this, nor of any awkwardness in transition from one enclosure to the next.

Influences upon the garden's creator may have included Tudor British, Renaissance Italian, late-17th-century French; but he merged them and built on them to produce something utterly original. It is a garden of genius that gives pleasure at every level and seems to have something fresh to offer at every visit. □

Writer, editor, horticulturalist Anthony Huxley is the author of Plant and Planet *and* An Illustrated History of Gardening. *Recently made a member of the Council of the Royal Horticultural Society, he has received its top award, the Victoria Medal of Honour.*

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AMERICAN ARTS AND CRAFTS







Vance Jordan and Todd Volpe have turned their passion for a period into a trend-setting business

By Nancy Richardson

The most avant-garde young dealers in the decorative arts have been making a name in the last 10 years by resurrecting forgotten periods that our own era has dismissed as uninteresting or even ugly. The current American Arts and Crafts revival is a perfect example.

The houses built and arranged by our grandparents in the first years of the century constitute a look that most of us have never even seen in place. The generation between rebelled against the Arts and Crafts scheme of things with such force as to make the whole episode disappear into the attic or under the wrecker's ball. Now, oddly enough, its popularity stems from influences similar to those that made it a success the first time around. The present dissatisfaction with contemporary machine-made furnishings has fostered a longing for things made by hand. The American 1980s, like the 1900s, honors the craftsman.

Two dealers who are making the book in Arts and Crafts furniture, art objects, and pictures are cousins who started out in the early '70s as collectors of a then overlooked category. Both Vance Jordan and Todd Volpe were art-history students. "Every Sunday Vance and I would go out and buy whatever we could find with the little money we had and drag it home. People even gave us things," remembers Todd Volpe. "We were young, had few prejudices, and responded innocently to what we saw. So much of it was being abused or neglected. That amazed us because we found the things so beautiful. Our first love was Stickley furniture and we've never lost that. Its appeal is so immediate—the wood, the finish, the workmanship, the usefulness. There's no distance created by a Stickley desk—it's not an ornament. We used to see photos of Orson Welles sitting in a Morris chair and looking so comfortable. Steichen had Stickley furniture and he photographed everyone sitting in it," Volpe continues.

In 1975 Vance Jordan lived in a three-room apartment with 70 pieces of furniture by Gustav Stickley and various other makers, 300 pieces of pottery, and 300 watercolors. Todd Volpe had a similarly filled one-room apartment where there was barely room for a bed. In 15 or 20 apartments of friends several larger pieces of furniture and pottery found temporary housing. It was time to open a gallery.

Above left: Vance Jordan with painting by Julius Steward. *Center:* Large Rookwood vase. *Right:* Todd Volpe in a Morris chair by Gustav Stickley, blue Fulper pot on Stickley side table.

What gave Jordan and Volpe th confidence that this period was abou to take off? Both knew that museum were planning exhibitions based o long-ignored Arts and Crafts colle tions. Todd Volpe had helped cata logue the Brooklyn Museum' collections of American art pottery which had been housed for years in th museum's boiler room. But by far th biggest catalyst was an exhibition a Princeton in 1972: *The Arts and Craft Movement in America 1876–1916,* or ganized by Robert Judson Clark. The catalogue was the first comprehensive look at the years 1876–1916. The es says and rich illustrations set forth the appeal of Herter Bros. and Gustav Stickley furniture, Frank Lloyd Wrigh interiors, Tiffany lamps, posters in spired by the French Art Nouveau pottery with Japanese-inspired glaze and form-follows-function shapes Louis L. Sullivan ornamental bronze medallions, George Elmslie stained glass windows. Text traced the late 19th-century love affair with the artis as craftsman, which had sprung up firs in England, then in America.

Professor Clark's catalogue and the Princeton exhibition provided impor tant visual and intellectual underpin nings for what Vance Jordan and Todd Volpe felt in *(Continued on page 206)*

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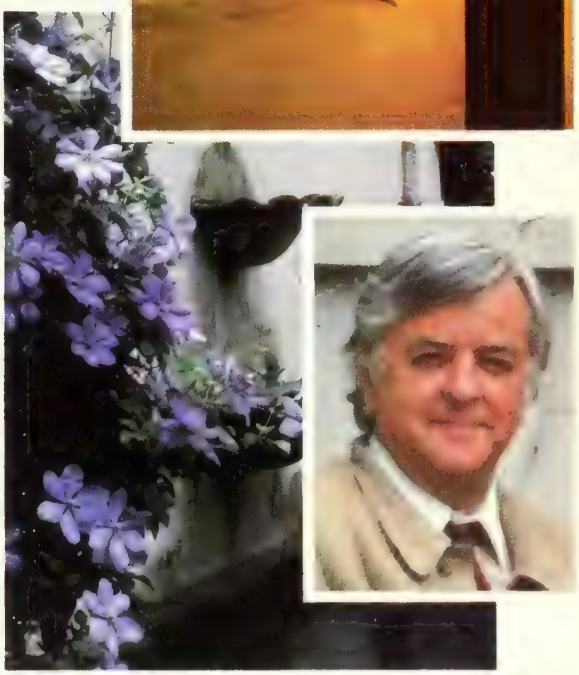
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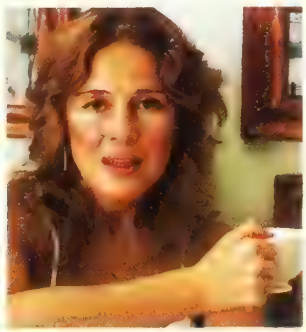
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(Continued from page 204) their bones. By late 1976 they had opened their gallery, and by 1978 when the Delaware Museum presented the first major exhibition of American art pottery their name appeared in a small list of prestigious lenders.

On a Saturday in June 1980, Todd Volpe didn't even hesitate as he bid $16,000 on a Rookwood vase with a sea-green ground painted with fish. He was an underbidder on a larger Rookwood vase with the head of an Indian on an umber and burnt orange background that went for $35,000. Turn-of-the-century American art pottery was definitely coming into its own and the gallery at 457 West Broadway attracted collectors like Joseph Hirshhorn and publisher–list-maker Malcolm Forbes. Today Jordan Volpe is *the* source for Arts and Crafts pottery, furniture, and pictures. Staff and experts sit at one of six handsome oak desks by Gustav Stickley. A Morris chair, octagonal table, long library tables, and a quirky white oak chair made for watching a card game are placed like sculpture. The furniture is easy to like put against a simple background. End tables and pedestals support large Fulper jars, or a grouping of green-glaze Grueby pots. A collection of small pots in metallic glazes that look uncannily like twisted paper or metal make a substantial display of George Orr's work.

The pictures on the walls of 457 West Broadway reflect the same influences as the furniture and pottery. It's easy in this setting to judge paintings as decoration. The big front room of the gallery works both as a sitting room and a picture gallery. Newcomers wonder if anything is for sale. "It must mean we have found a pleasant way of presenting our pieces," says Volpe. This treatment of paintings as part of the scheme of the room is something Vance Jordan makes quite a point of: "I love the late 19th-century paintings done by American expatriates. It is a school of painters just coming to the surface again. Until recently everyone has been preoccupied with the Hudson River School. I saw the same thing going on with late 19th-century painting as with furniture and pottery. It was a good opportunity to buy things no one else was buying and show something that looked well with it." □



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A TIME TO HARVEST

The confessions of a sensual gardener

By Eleanor Perényi

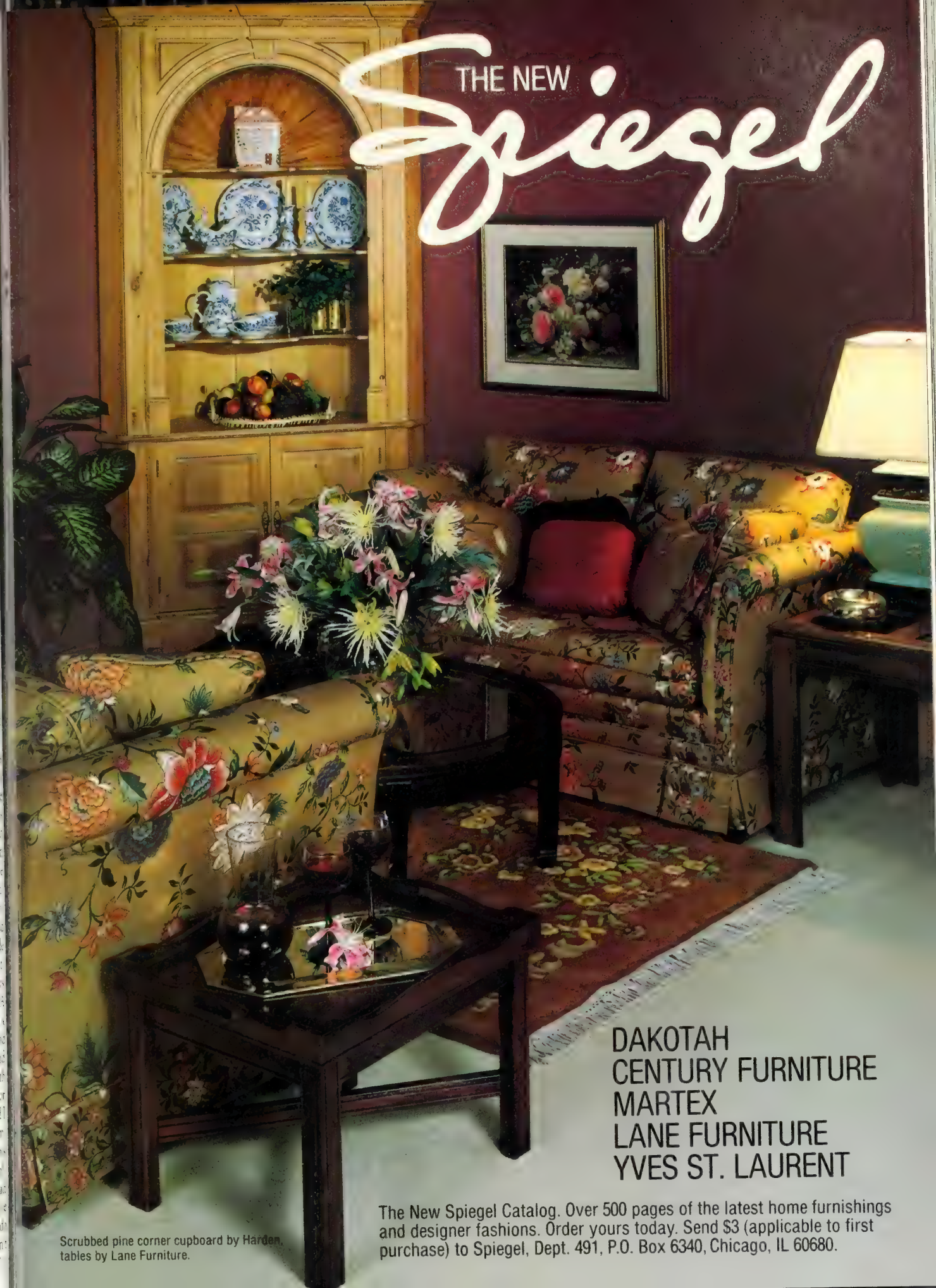


The signs are unmistakable, and have been for some time. I read them in the eyes of the ticket sellers who have begun to issue me the senior citizen's discount before I ask for it. I note with discouragement that the recession has so far failed to confer the only benefit I might have expected from it, by steering at least a few qualified applicants for garden work to my door. I tire more easily than I did, and shrink from tasks I performed with alacrity even a year or so ago. In other words, I am getting on, and if I don't take steps to halt the relentless proliferation of plants under my care, go on a kind of gardener's diet, I will be facing an unmanageable situation.

Many factors have contributed to this state of affairs. In horticulture as in cookery, I have always been both greedy and curious, wanting to try everything, overindulgent in what I like; and there is no denying that a first-class catalogue tempts me in much the same way that a sumptuous menu does: I want everything in sight. I eat for pleasure, not health or necessity, and I garden for the same reasons. Or did. Now I am beginning to admit my weaknesses, and on occasion to try to control them. Thus on a visit to Peru last year, I firmly resisted buying the seed of a strange Andean corn whose enlarged kernels are plucked and eaten like candy—thereby avoiding almost certain failure with an exotic crop, not to speak of possible arrest at the Miami airport, where the authorities don't look kindly on horticultural imports from South America. That was progress, of a sort. Unfortunately for the cause of self-discipline, it was more than counteracted b[illegible]ther events.

One of the consequences of publishing a book about gardening, as I did in 1981, has been a flood of special seed, cuttings from favorite plants, and more out-of-the-way catalogues than I knew existed—all sent to me by kind readers who known an addict when they see one. I needed these things about as much as a fat person needs a shipment of pâté de foi gras, and was just as incapable of saying no. Was I to refuse a lovely old-fashioned Michaelmas daisy that grows into an upright bush rather than the floppy tangle of the moderns? A fine day lily streaked with bronze from somebody's grandmother's garden? The seed of French forget-me-nots, which are far superior to the ones we grow in this country; and that of a double pink poppy, from Vermont's "northeast kingdom" and quite the most beautiful annual poppy I have ever seen? Not I. The plants were planted, the seed sown, whether there was room for them or not. Similar adjustments were made among the berries and vegetables. A black currant from New York State (the black aren't to be found in catalogues) has joined the reds. *Radicchio,* the Italian cousin of endive, said to rise from its winter grave to produce red-and-white rosettes for the earliest spring salads, will (I hope) soon be showing itself. A tomato once grown by Tolstoy's daughter Alexandra can't, I suppose, actually have originated at Yasnaya Polyana, but the glamour of that provenance added enormously to the vegetable patch last summer, and will again, since I have saved the seed.

There were, of course, other things that didn't fare so well. A reader in Alaska, after chastising me for saying I couldn't grow the Pacific delphiniums, sent me the seed of hers, assuring me they would reach 10 feet. They didn't. Nor was I surprised when the seed of *Meconopsis betonicifolia,* the blue Himalayan poppy, also sent me by an incredulous reader, failed for the umpteenth time to germinate. But fortune smiled on the vast majority of these horticultural gifts—thereby leaving me with a whole new assortment of plants to take care of. That isn't all. There are also those little specialized catalogues, real booby traps for the unwary, and I am afraid for the wary as well. I know, for example, that the only fruits I can grow in any profusion are raspberries, currants, quinces, peaches in good years, and some rock-like but tasty pears. But there was the Michigan nursery offering European plums, rare old American apples, and a dozen varieties of gooseberry I have never previously heard of. Shall I break down and admit that I ordered a Reine Claude plum? I have no idea where I will put it, but never mind that. Space can always be found for a dwarf tree, can't it? A more serious problem will be finding a place for the giant dahlias, the kind that are the size of dinner plates, and therefore despised of gardeners with claims to a refined taste. Probably for this reason they are hard to find, and I have none. I will, though, next summer. They are on order from an Illinois nursery that deals exclusively in dahlias, and would that knowledge of it had been kept from me. I already have more dahlias than I know what to do with, and lovely ones, too, that I won't want to dis- *(Continued on page 210)*


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"No collector of old masters or rare jewels looks with more covetous and satisfied eyes on his hoard than I do on the heap of vegetables, herbs, and flowers assembled around the kitchen sink"

(Continued from page 208) card in favor of the new giants when they arrive. So much for self-control. About all I can say for myself at this stage is that I did *not* send in any orders to the nursery in Santa Fe that specializes in desert plants and Mexican-American vegetables; nor yet to the one in Washington State that carries seed of wildflowers native to the Northwest. Some vestiges of common sense I do retain.

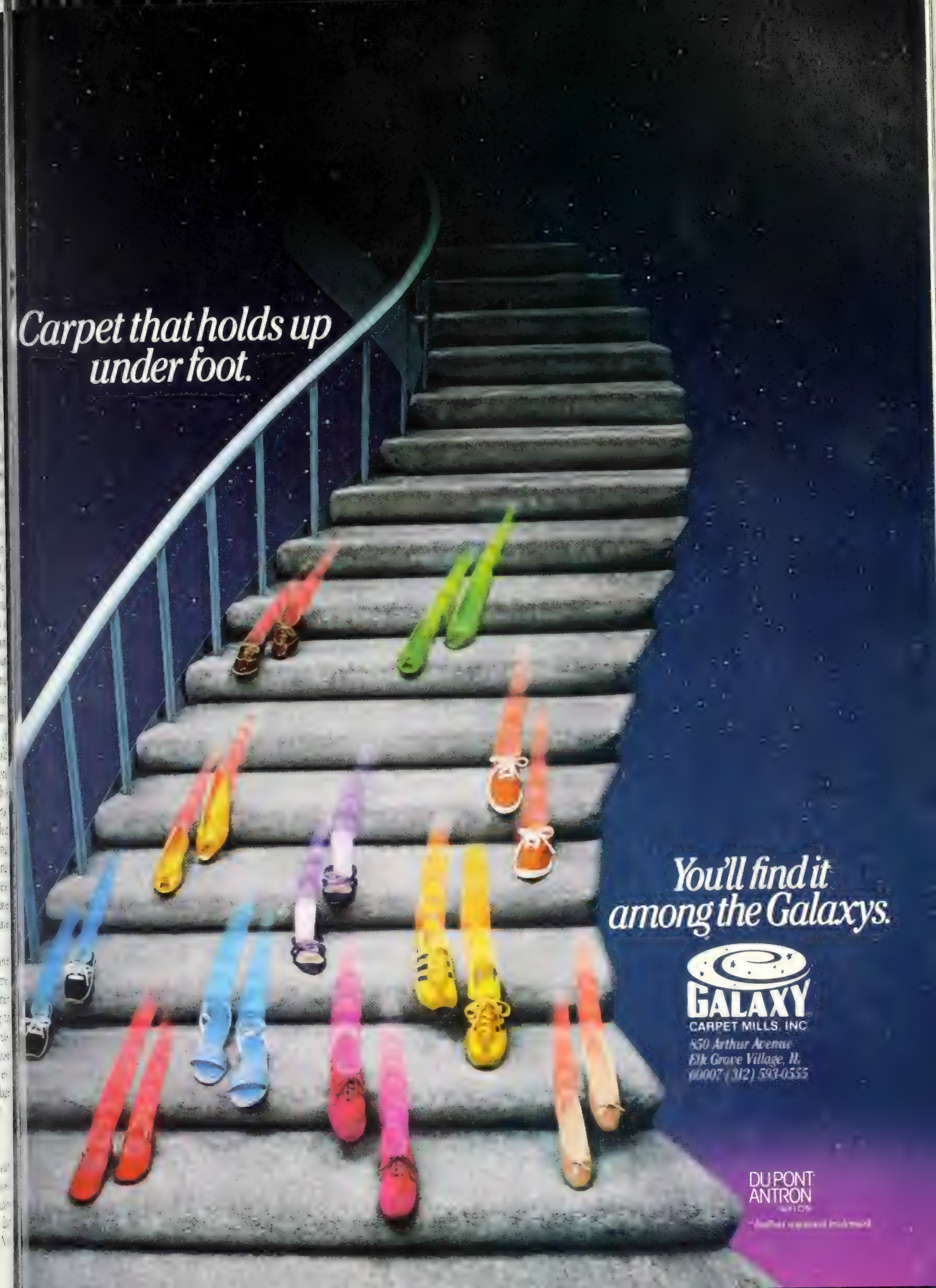
At any rate, I hope so, because the regular catalogues are still to come, Burpee, Harris, Wayside, and oh yes, Jackson and Perkins: I have a note here that two of the standard rose trees will have to be replaced—unless I decide to give up standard rose trees, which always do have to be replaced in this climate. Perhaps I will decide that. Then there are the biennials. This will surely be the year when I make up my mind to go without Canterbury bells and wallflowers, dame's rocket and sweet William. It is true that the beds haven't much else to show in early June (that is why biennials were invented), but considering that they take a year to come into bloom and are then finished, they are an unconscionable investment in time and labor. Certainly they should be forgotten. Annuals, too, since I can always pick up the few I need for picking at the local garden center; and it ought not to matter that they are hardly ever the ones I want. Striped zinnias and fluffy lemon-colored marigolds aren't a necessity.

The practice of *triage* (a word applied, most appropriately, to the battlefield) should be easiest of all among the vegetables and herbs. It isn't as if I hadn't long ago eliminated Chinese cabbage, snow peas, cardoons, and half a dozen other elitist vegetables this family just does not care for no matter how authentically I prepare them. Others, like purple cauliflower, the waxy European potatoes known to the few American catalogues that carry them as "German fingerlings," celeriac, Savoy cabbage, and those skinny Japanese eggplants whose tips curl up like dragons' tails, though they also belong to the elitist category, have on the other hand established themselves as staples. My excursions among the rarer vegetables are accordingly less adventurous than they used to be: I know what I want and what I don't, and am fairly ruthless in my selection. The same is true among the herbs. I now know that I will never find the slightest use for the hair borage with its pretty blue flowers; that no amount of pressure from food snobs will make me prefer the flat Italian parsley to the curly variety; and that I am probably the only cook in North America with any pretension to sophistication who loathes coriander. My herbs have reached the magic and irreducible number of seven: tarragon, chives, basil, thyme, dill, sage, and mint. (I don't count the unkillables—the oregano and lovage—that go on appearing whether I want them or not.)

So there is hope that this year my reach won't exceed my grasp (or is it the other way around?) and that I will show a restraint appropriate to my age and station when I make out the orders. But I rather doubt it. The trouble lies, as I well know, in my primal vision of what a garden should be—pretty to look at, of course, a pleasure ground that can accommodate the milder forms of sport (croquet, bowls, but not, please, swimming, only a few geniuses having figured out how to design a pool that isn't an eyesore), but above all an Eden of abundance. I simply can't imagine owning a piece of land that didn't provide me with vegetables and fruits, flowers and herbs, because the harvesting of these things is the greatest pleasure in my gardening life, perhaps even its raison d'être. There are those, I know, who find this emphasis on productivity rather repellent—as though I were treating my land like a business whose aim was to show a profit. And it may be true that I have more in common with the peasant than the beauty-lover whose idea of perfection is a single iris in a vase. But neither am I a member of that group that justifies the raising of vegetables on the ground that it saves money, or even that the vegetables themselves are superior to those available at a good market. They may be, and again they may not—depending on weather, one's own skills, and other imponderables. A couple of markets in my neighborhood happen to be excellent; and so is the local garden center, whose owner raises beautiful flowers in his own fields and greenhouses. I can't really pretend that mine (the lilies excepted) are better, though they are certainly cheaper. But no: my garden isn't a practical proposition and I can't pretend that it is. In spite of the labor and time expended on it, it is essentially a luxury, a form of hedonism; and I am never more conscious of this than when I arm myself with a basket and scissors and sally forth on a summer morning, or better still perhaps, a summer evening—to harvest the results of my intemperance. No collector of old masters or rare jewels looks with more covetous and satisfied eyes on his hoard than I do on the heap of vegetables, herbs, and flowers assembled around the kitchen sink for sorting, cutting, peeling, shelling, arranging, and cooking. The sensation is so pleasurable that I am grateful not to have had Puritan ancestors, who might have taught me that it was a sin.

People often tell me they would love to garden if only they had the time. They make me laugh. Who has time? Not I, not anybody with a living to earn, a family to care for, the usual quota of responsibilities. I garden because I can't help myself, and by way of excuse remind myself of the old adage that nothing succeeds like excess. □

Eleanor Perényi, a former magazine editor, is the author of a biography of composer Franz Liszt and a delightful garden book, Green Thoughts, *published last year. Her own garden appeared in November 1981 House & Garden.*


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(Continued from page 181) Fadrique with the house of Pilate.

Don Fadrique died without an heir, so the estate passed to a nephew called Don Per Afán de Ribera, who was created Duke of Alcalá in 1558. He was appointed Viceroy of Naples, where he lived from 1559 to 1572. On Italian soil the Viceroy could indulge what was to become almost an obsession: the collection of Roman and Greek statuary. Around 1568 he dispatched an Italian architect, Benvenuto Tortello, to modernize the Casa de Pilatos and a sculptor, Giuliano Meniquini, to restore any faulty pieces. The collection went in several consignments—one lost when the ship was captured by Turkish pirates and its contents thrown overboard.

Wisely following a long-established Spanish practice Tortello hardly touched Don Fadrique's palace: he simply built a new one alongside. He turned an orchard on the north into a symmetrical Mannerist garden, the Jardin Grande: at each of the short ends he built identical two-story loggias with arches supported by lovely antique columns and on one of the long sides, a one-story loggia. In addition he constructed a monumental entrance hall which was later turned into the most sumptuous stables imaginable. He then proceeded to distribute antique statuary around the palace. But as fate would have it, Don Per Afán, Duke of Alcalá, never got to see this beautiful décor; he died in Naples as he was about to leave for Spain.

Tortello caused in the city an impact not unlike that of the Genoese marbles imported by the first Marquis of Tarifa. If those had shown to the Sevillians the niceties of the Lombardic Early Renaissance, Tortello brought with him the severe elegance of Mannerism. He was appointed architect to the city and designed the elaborate decorations for the Royal Entry of King Philip II in 1570.

Like his uncle, Don Per Afán died without a direct heir. The second Duke of Alcalá, a nephew, hardly paid any attention to the Casa de Pilatos, and we must wait for his son, the third Duke, Don Fernando. Highly cultured and always to be found in the company of poets and painters, Don Fernando decided to sell his father's palace and apply the proceeds to the Casa de Pilatos. As the estate was entailed he needed special permission from the King. He based his petition on the fact that he hardly had room to house all his servants. These went by the dozens and included physicians, astrologers, musicians . . . a real small court!

Don Fernando's architect was Juan de Oviedo, a Spaniard and a key figure in the development of Baroque. His activity at the house included the remodeling of the south end, the state rooms that now house the family archives, and a superb library with a vaulted ceiling. Unfortunately this was severely damaged in the tremors that accompanied the Lisbon earthquake of 1755, and all that survives is a great slate chimneypiece, now in the dining room. Don Fernando got his friend and fellow humanist, the painter Francisco Pacheco, to paint a series of ceilings. Pacheco's fame as an artist has been obscured by that of his disciple and son-in-law Diego Velázquez, yet on this occasion he managed to render in a grand manner the swan-song of Sevillian humanism.

Like his great-uncle, Don Fernando was appointed Viceroy of Naples. There he patronized the Spanish-born painter Ribera and added to the family collection of antiques. Prominent among these, and a personal gift of the Pope, was the lead urn with the ashes of Emperor Trajan, found at the base of the famous Roman column. This held place of honor at the library until (as legend has it) a curious servant opened it and the ashes spilt over the garden . . . dust to dust indeed!

Unhappy days lay ahead for the house. Through lack of male heirs, the titles and estate passed to Doña Ana María Enríquez de Ribera who, in 1623, married the Seventh Duke of Medinaceli. The new couple moved to the husband's palace in Madrid. The court was all-powerful now and no aristocrat could afford to live far from it. The family hardly ever visited Seville; wheat and produce were stored in the lofty state halls. Frescoes were whitewashed and the house was slowly stripped of its treasures.

For over two centuries the Casa de Pilatos lay in decay just as the city of Seville itself, once the center of traffic with America, slowly turned into a provincial town. It would take a new kind of taste, a new kind of sensibility to appreciate the charm of the house. And fortunately this came with the 19th century and the Romantic movement.

Seville became fashionable again and the family took a new interest in the Casa de Pilatos. An energetic program of restoration was undertaken; almost *over*-energetic, for with typical romantic taste the picturesque and the exotic prevailed above any archaeological consideration. But the work carried out in the late 1850s almost certainly saved the palace, and in any case, simply added a new page to its long artistic history.

After the 1936–39 Civil War in Spain the present Duke and Duchess of Medinaceli settled for good at Casa de Pilatos. A modern house was managed in the part that had been ruined in the Lisbon earthquake, and a loving and patient campaign to bring the palace back to its former glory was launched. Collections were reassembled, and works of art brought from other family possessions. First came the grand family archives, still largely unexplored but of the highest importance for study of Spanish history—the present Duchess of Medinaceli holds the greatest concentration of titles ever, some of them as old as the 9th century. Then came the works of art and part of the archaeological collection.

Much of the credit for the immaculate state of the Casa de Pilatos today must go to the Duke of Segorbe, youngest son of the Duke and Duchess of Medinaceli, who especially in the last few years has personally supervised to the last detail every restoration. His own flat, a stunning contemporary one carved out of the old attics, may truly be considered the latest addition to this old palace whose unmistakable mudéjar personality has proved capable of absorbing and transforming every change in style into a unique and harmonic blend. A charitable trust now runs the house, which is open to the public daily. Thus the Casa de Pilatos will continue to charm and delight generation after generation. □

Dr. Vicente Lleó Cañal, a visiting member of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, teaches art history at the University of Seville. The author of several books, he is engaged in a study of the history of the Casa de Pilatos.



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(Continued from page 168) relatively low-cost design.

The 15-story, city-block-square Portland Building cost $30 million, but that is not a particularly large sum as things go these days. (It will be interesting to see what Graves does with $44 million in his forthcoming headquarters building for Humana, Inc., in Louisville, Kentucky.) Graves had never done a large-scale building before, his previous built work being limited to houses, offices, and showrooms. Thus a great deal of interest was focused on his ability to handle the significant increase in architectural magnitude, especially since the appeal of his recent work has been based in large part on its human scale and delicate effects of detail and ornament, which rarely have been seen in mainstream public architecture in recent years.

A glance at the older, Classically inspired structures near it immediately reveals part of the problem with The Portland Building: far from Graves's design having too much detail, as some have asserted, it in fact hasn't nearly enough. Although the building is a most welcome addition to that city's lackluster skyline, from a distance it seems as two-dimensional as a painted billboard, especially in contrast to the adjacent buildings of the 1910s and 20s, which may not be great architecture, but which at least impart a real sense of volume. Graves has often taken a painterly approach to architectural composition, but he has adopted the flattened picture plane of the Cubists rather than the illusionistic perspective of the Old Masters. Here he again uses the former, but the traditional scale- and volume-producing elements of Classical architecture work much less effectively in Graves's Modernist recombinations.

For example, on all four sides of the building's exterior, vertical stripes (terra-cotta-painted concrete alternating with black glass) are meant to resemble Classical pilasters, but the scale has been so exploded that the original reference is lost. At the top of the pairs of pilasters on the front and back elevations are protruding triangular bracketlike forms that are intended to signify Classical capitals but likewise are not easily recognizable as such. And the large expanses of glass between those pilasters, which Graves had wanted to seem like gigantic windows, also don't quite work that way because the mullions dividing them into four large "panes" are given too much visual competition by the many other smaller panels of the curtain wall.

But that having been said, there is much else to admire on the exterior. Graves's use of polychromy is one of the most hotly debated aspects of The Portland Building. Before the outside was painted and tiled, it was seen by the architectural historian Colin Rowe, who thereupon told Graves he should leave it in its natural concrete finish. Rowe was mistaken. Graves's rich range of colors—pale-yellow walls, burnt-sienna tile on the large keystone-shaped areas of the front and back of the building, sea-green tile on the arcaded street-level base—adds needed brightness to a city whose skies are overcast for much of the year. Interestingly, it also harks back to an earlier local tradition of pre-modern buildings painted in unusual and pleasing color combinations that make a much more satisfying point of reference than the bland downtown high-rises of the 1960s and '70s.

Even more successful are the interiors of The Portland Building. With all the architectural fanfare Graves has employed to mark the main portal—including provisions for a representational statue symbolizing Portland to be installed above the entrance—the low, nondescript doorways themselves come as something of a letdown. But once one enters, that feeling dissipates. The central, two-story atrium is a magnificent composition, big enough to seem appropriately monumental, but not so large as to diminish the visitor's sense of his own individuality. This is not the kind of anonymous, Muzak-filled lobby that most of us have come to associate with office buildings. It is, instead, dignified without being intimidating, traditional though by no means archaeological, and appropriately grand without seeming profligate. The architect clearly has his finger on the pulse of the times. Graves has a talent for creating thoughtful, comforting interior spaces, and it is a pleasure for a change to see a public building that doesn't mimic either a suburban shopping mall or a Hyatt Regency Hotel. A combination of Classical and Art Deco motifs was widely used in 1930s public buildings, and Graves's own distinctive mix of those styles therefore seems particularly appropriate for this building type. Yet its atmosphere is quite a bit less gloomy than New Deal–vintage government offices. And in place of WPA murals of happy farm hands and heroic steel workers, Graves plans to contribute two allegorical wall paintings of his own, as he has done for most of his buildings. The superb, traditional graphics were devised by Bonnell Design Associates.

Glossy black terrazzo flooring, fat bolection moldings painted a shiny forest green, and dadoes tiled in blue-green work well with walls painted in the muted, fleshy pastels that are by now a Graves hallmark. Some of the corridors appear a bit on the dark side; Graves attributes this to the city's economizing with a lower lighting level than he had wanted, but it should be noted that the interiors of some of his color-saturated Sunar showrooms are similarly dim. On the upper floors of The Portland Building, most of the offices—the interiors of which Graves did not design—have unusually small windows (only 4 feet square). If a large structure is to be more energy-conservative than many recent high-rises have been, then International Style window walls can't be used in every situation. Yet these windows are considerably smaller than those of the average Art Deco skyscraper, which is not wasteful of energy. However, it is doubtful that there is a handsomer public office interior completed within recent memory than the first-floor permit bureau, especially if you remember wherever it was that you last had your driver's license renewed.

Despite the problems, Portland has done very well by itself, even if public opinion there seems as divided as that in professional architectural circles. After the controversy dies down, however, The Portland Building could well attain the kind of vibrant, quirky charm that we now associate with Victorian buildings: they may lack a timeless serenity, but they possess undeniable character. That this building has in spades, and love it or loathe it, it will pique people's thinking about architecture and its role in the city for quite some time. And of how many buildings can we say that? □

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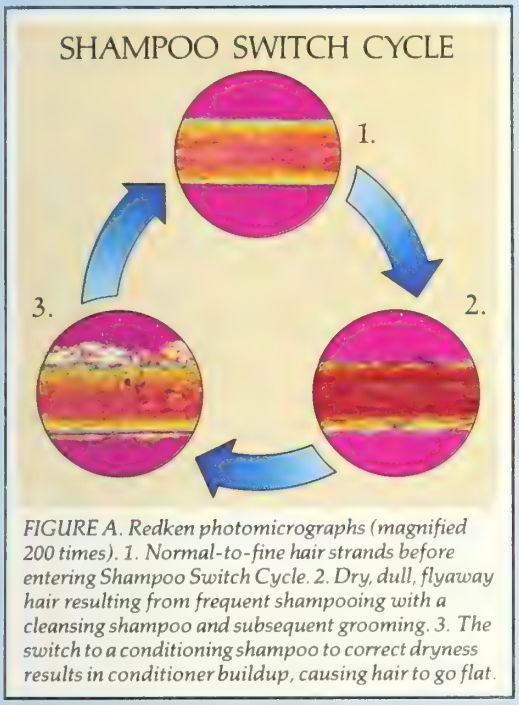


FIGURE A. Redken photomicrographs (magnified 200 times). 1. Normal-to-fine hair strands before entering Shampoo Switch Cycle. 2. Dry, dull, flyaway hair resulting from frequent shampooing with a cleansing shampoo and subsequent grooming. 3. The switch to a conditioning shampoo to correct dryness results in conditioner buildup, causing hair to go flat.

These shampoos can get you trapped in the Shampoo Switch Cycle (See Figure A).

Unusual? Not at all. You probably have normal to fine hair that doesn't hold body naturally. And you're probably choosing your shampoos by self-prescription at the drugstore or supermarket.

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"My friends have given me so many things, especially ideas. I don't want to fly under false colors. People may get the wrong idea and think I'm artistic. It's my friends who are"

(Continued from page 127) feel like home and with furnishings of purely personal value. And it is a perfect place for being with children.

"I really search out the hours to spend with Lynda and Luci and their children; the private life is hard to come by," says Mrs. Johnson, who spends much of her time planning and fund-raising for the LBJ School of Public Affairs, the LBJ Library and Museum, and University of Texas committees—when she is not traveling to board meetings of the National Geographic Society, the National Park Service Advisory Council, and the American Conservation Association.

The little restored farmhouse, one hour from Austin, where Luci Johnson and her four children live, brings everyone in for visits. (Lynda and her husband, Virginia's Governor Charles Robb, and their three girls visit when they can.) Lyn, the only grandson, Patrick Lyndon Nugent, 15, "asked for permission, and got it, to have his whole class come out. There were 32 boys and girls here in sleeping bags and just enough beds for the chaperones. They seemed to have a wonderful time. What I think the younger children like best here is the freedom, though I do have a few rules, like two green vegetables a day, and no silver spoons out of the house—I get batches of plastic spoons for their ice-cream cups!"

Mrs. Johnson encourages the children to read and likes it when schools give summer reading lists. In her house there are plenty of books, framed poems, even pillows to read: "Fools rush in—and get all the best seats"; "Start the day with a happy thought"; and from Thoreau: "To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of the arts."

Houseparties are a rare delight for Mrs. Johnson, but she has enjoyed sharing the cheery simplicity of this house with some close friends. "We take turns having "Think & Shrink"—our version of a few days at a health spa. We do exercises, swim, walk one to three miles each day, have good low-calorie meals. We invite a masseuse and a facial person. Then at night we have someone come talk to us about nutrition or the arts or public affairs. It makes losing a few pounds fun."

"I'm very sentimental about this house, partly because of friends," she says. "They have given me so many things, especially ideas. I don't want to fly under false colors. People may get the wrong idea and think I'm artistic. It's my friends who are." And with characteristic modesty she adds, "It's rather like my cookies for the grandchildren. I make sure there are cookies for them, but I don't make them!"

It was an old friend, Jesse Kellam, who encouraged her to restore this house, and another, architect J. Roy White of Austin, who sketched and restored the ruins and so sensitively matched the new wing's quarry-stone and roof line and porch to the old. Working with contractor Leo Blanchard, he also planned everything for easy maintenance: plaster and beading to replace old walls and ceilings, shutters instead of curtains, Mexican tiles in the baths and kitchen, bedroom carpeting with a hooked-rug look. Mrs. Johnson sought out Texas craftsmen to decorate the house with stenciling, faux bois, and hand-painted tiles.

The furniture also has special meaning, "though it's more second-hand than antique." The fine high-back bed was in a friend's attic. Another friend brought the zinc-topped kitchen table over in her pickup truck one Christmas Eve. Its iron bench is from the depot in Cotulla; a friend sent it when the depot closed, and said, "When Lyndon taught Mexican children here as a young man he must have sat here waiting for the train home."

You know how personal this house is when you notice that some vases and other objects discreetly bear her real initials—CTJ, Claudia Taylor Johnson. The marble-topped bureau in her bedroom was her maternal grandmother's. A rocking chair is from Autauga County, Alabama, where she spent happy summers in childhood. A band of local stitchery—"Die Erinnerung," German for "remembrance"—hangs over baby pictures and a poem President Johnson's mother liked. All seven of Mrs. Johnson's grandchildren have sat in the old highchair.

Now that this house has become a haven, Mrs. Johnson says, "I've set my sights on having time with each grandchild, individually, here and at places they'd like to see." With Lyn she has backpacked and white-water rafted in West Virginia and seen the places where the Wright brothers flew in North Carolina. (Lyn, always keen on aeronautics, was impressed for the first time by the position of his grandfather, "Boppa," and grandmother, "Nini," when as a small child he saw pictures of them with the Charles Lindberghs.) For Coco (Nicole Nugent, 12), spring break meant some Broadway plays. Picnics at nearby Enchanted Rock with Rebekah, 8, and playing in the waves at Padre Island with namesake Claudia Taylor, 6, delighted the younger Nugents. The Robb girls, Lucinda, 14, Catherine, 12, and Jennifer, 4, have joined their grandmother for holidays here and elsewhere, and the older ones strengthen their Texas roots by attending nearby Camp Mystic with two of their cousins.

"I hope the grandchildren will associate me with family feeling, nature, conservation. But," Mrs. Johnson sighs, "I don't think I'll ever have much of a garden here. I've scattered phlox and coreopsis seeds in the field, and gaillardia—it's the easiest thing to grow. We have a beginning of bluebonnets, but as soon as they get a few inches high, the deer nip them to the ground. Lyndon and I drove to this spot many times just to look at the deer at sunset. I often think how the Lord made up to us in Texas for what we lack in the rich greenery of some other states: we really do have a glorious sky—the sunsets, the nighttime, the sunrise. This is a place for magic hours." □

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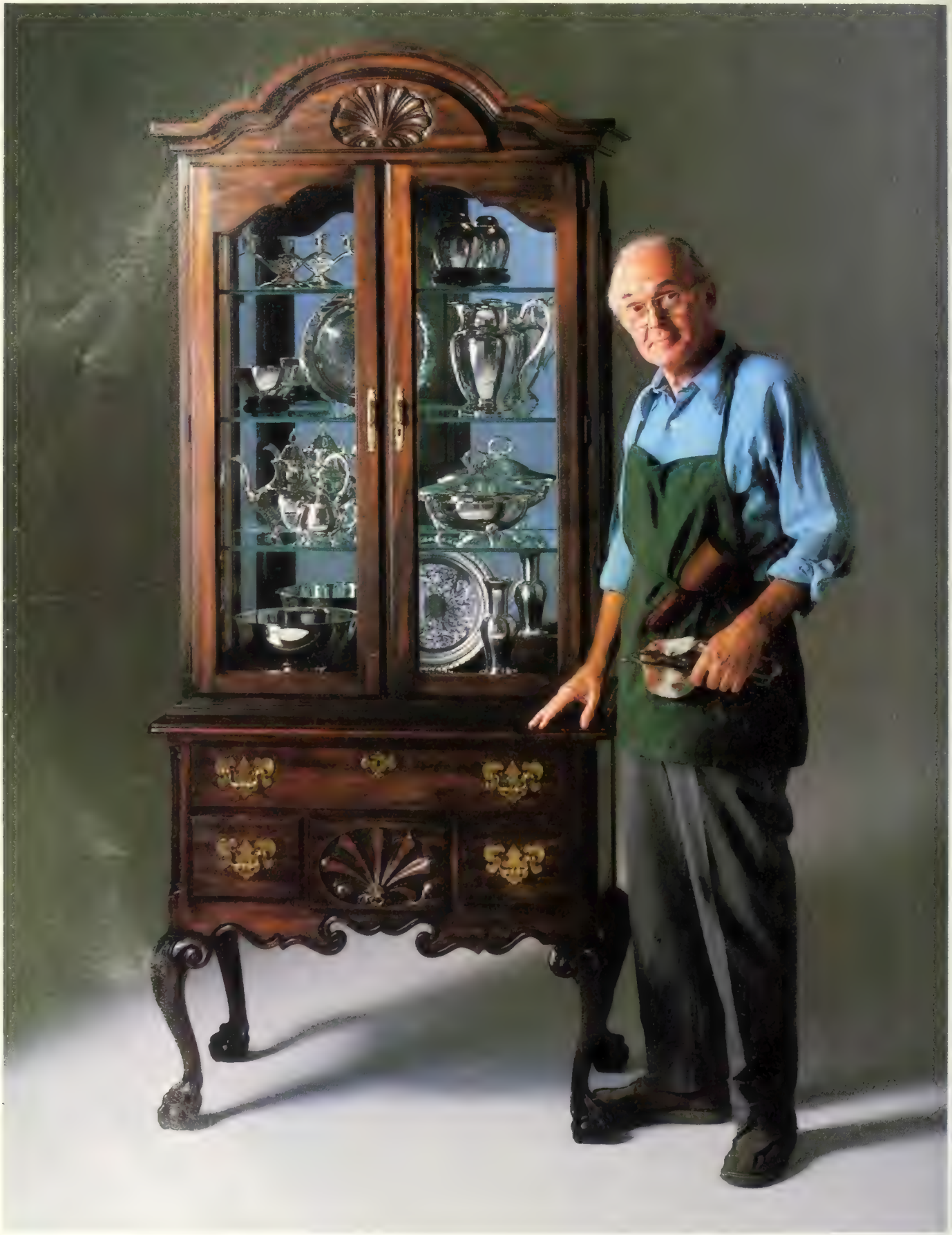
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One way to look at objects that challenge our expectations

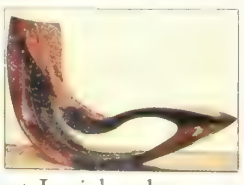
By Lee Hall

A new breed of objects grows now in a juncture between art and craft. While akin to both craft and art, these objects refuse to serve purposes traditionally associated with craft and, simultaneously, refuse to yield their meaning when subjected to strictly defined ideas about art. They, by their nature, tell me that I have developed reflexive habits of mind in looking at art and craft. They tell me, too, that my unchallenged mode of looking has lost its effectiveness.

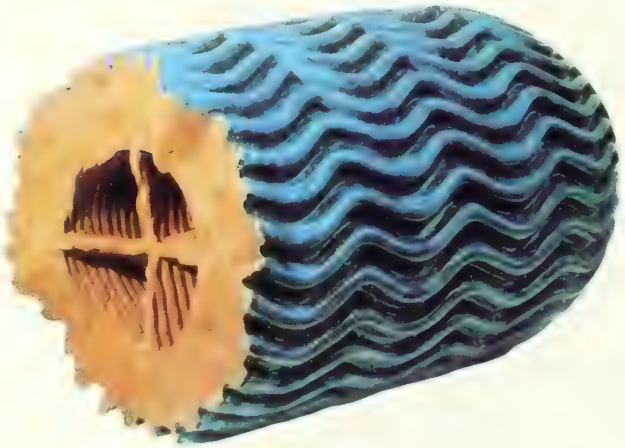
In addition to familiar mugs and pots, I see now vessels that will not hold anything. Along with scarves and throws wonderfully woven, I see now fabrics that will not submit to use as covering for the body or adornment for furniture. Tables are built and iron gates wrought, but I see, too, objects of wood or metal that do not function. I see objects that I am tempted to think should do something but I find them doing nothing save *being* themselves.

It is acceptable in my mind, of course, for art to be art. At best, in my prejudiced thinking, it is cheeky for other objects to exist merely to exist. Consider some examples of these new objects that challenge credulity:

I do not know and cannot imagine the never-never game implied in *48 Hour Game Piece,* created by Karl Bungerz. Complicated, technically superb, the object symbolizes attitudes about play; it exists as a statement and not as a game that I might play.



Similarly, Michael Coffey's *Aphrodite,* made of laminated and shaped mozambique, is a rocking lounge chair, a sleek piece of sculpture that carries as many references to Brancusi as to Chippendale.



Above: Untitled 1981, Graham Marks; Young Americans: Award Winners. *Below left: Aphrodite,* Michael Coffey; New Handmade Furniture. *Right: Theadolite* by William Ard; Young Americans: Metal. Photographs courtesy American Craft Council.

Theadolite, a surveyor's transit that will spend scant time with an engineer's crew, I suspect, was fabricated by William Ard from glass, sterling silver, and brass. It is at least as much a piece of jewelry or sculpture as it is a precision instrument.

Graham Marks has shaped painstakingly and beautifully a hand-built piece of earthenware that offers to hold nothing, carry no weight, protect nothing, do nothing, but to *be* something—itself.

These new objects step forth out of the skilled workmanship commonly associated with craft. Whether they exist as decoration or as symbols, it is the power of their presence—the flavors and forces that give each its singular identity—that link them to art and obscure their relationship to the tradition of craft.

Younger craftsworkers have grown restless with such tired dicta as form-follows-function. Form, they seem to argue in their objects, follows only the dictates of the human mind. There is a mild but pervasive revolution occuring within the world of craft.

There was a time when art and craft were not separate human activities. A skilled person worked in clay or metal or fiber and the things he made, whether pots or daggers or baskets, reflected his own skill and met the needs of the culture in which he worked. The objects of his talented hand, however beautifully wrought, functioned in the home or temple or on the battlefield. But someone, sometime, drew an arbitrary line between art and craft. On one side, artists—fine artists who make paintings or sculpture—have freedom, perhaps license, to make what they will how they will, technique be damned to the shadows along with other simplistic definitions of art.

Contemporary artists set their own standards of performance. An artist may shape or deny natural form in order to achieve the highest degree of personal freedom and expression. He may do whatever he wishes (or needs) to do with his materials in search of limits of expression suitable to his own interests, obsessions, or visions. He not only makes an object of art but makes, too, the idea or attitude or concept of art into which it must fit.

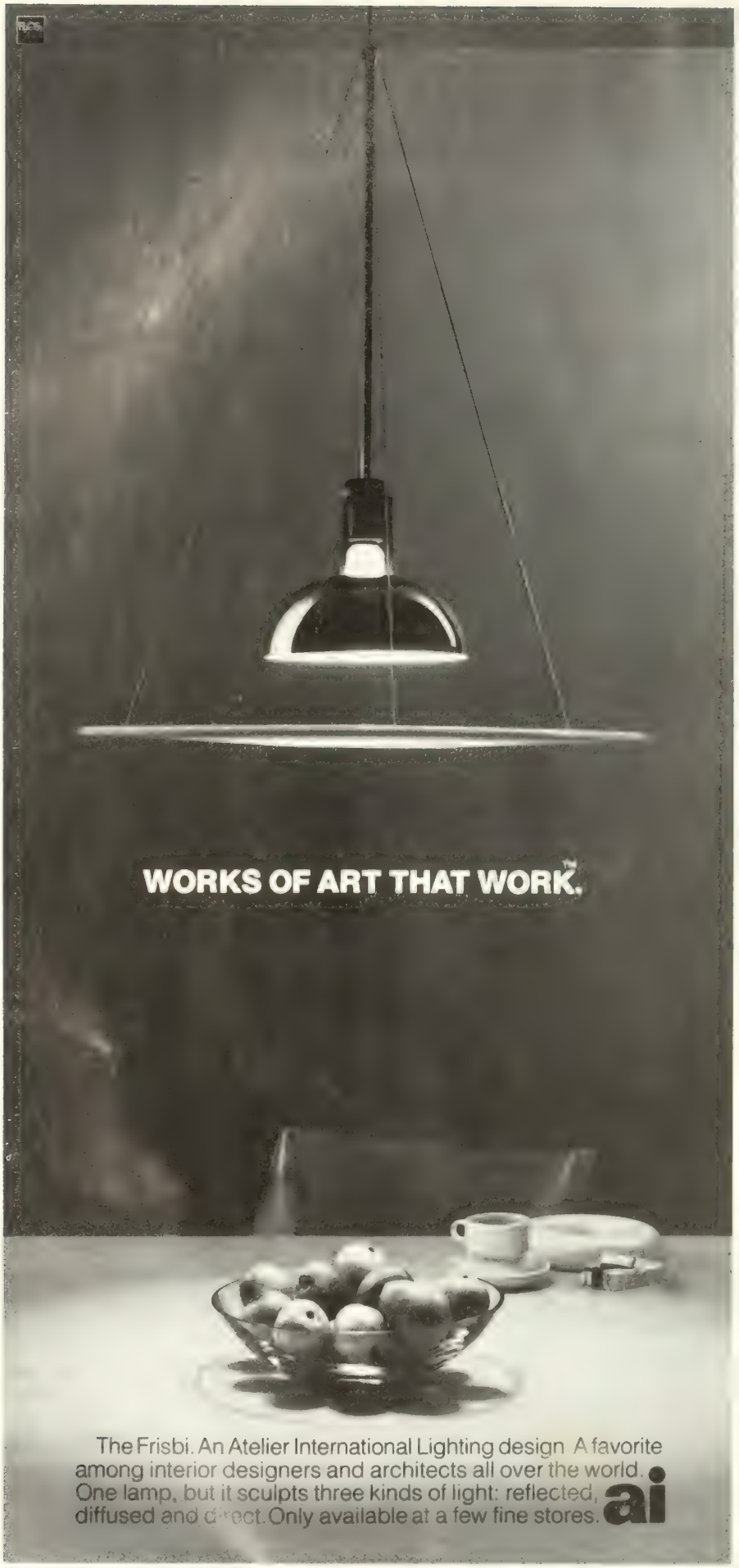


The craftsworker, meanwhile, was left at home to tend the hearth, to produce objects useful to daily life, objects required to be functional and recognizably so. He protected a corner of utility from the progress of the industrial revolution.

He continued to work with his hands, to make and remake understood objects with understood functions: this, after all, was craft. Safe and predictable.

The artist dealt with newness; the craftsworker *(Continued on page 10)*


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(Continued from page 8) made familiar things. Such were the lines of caste.

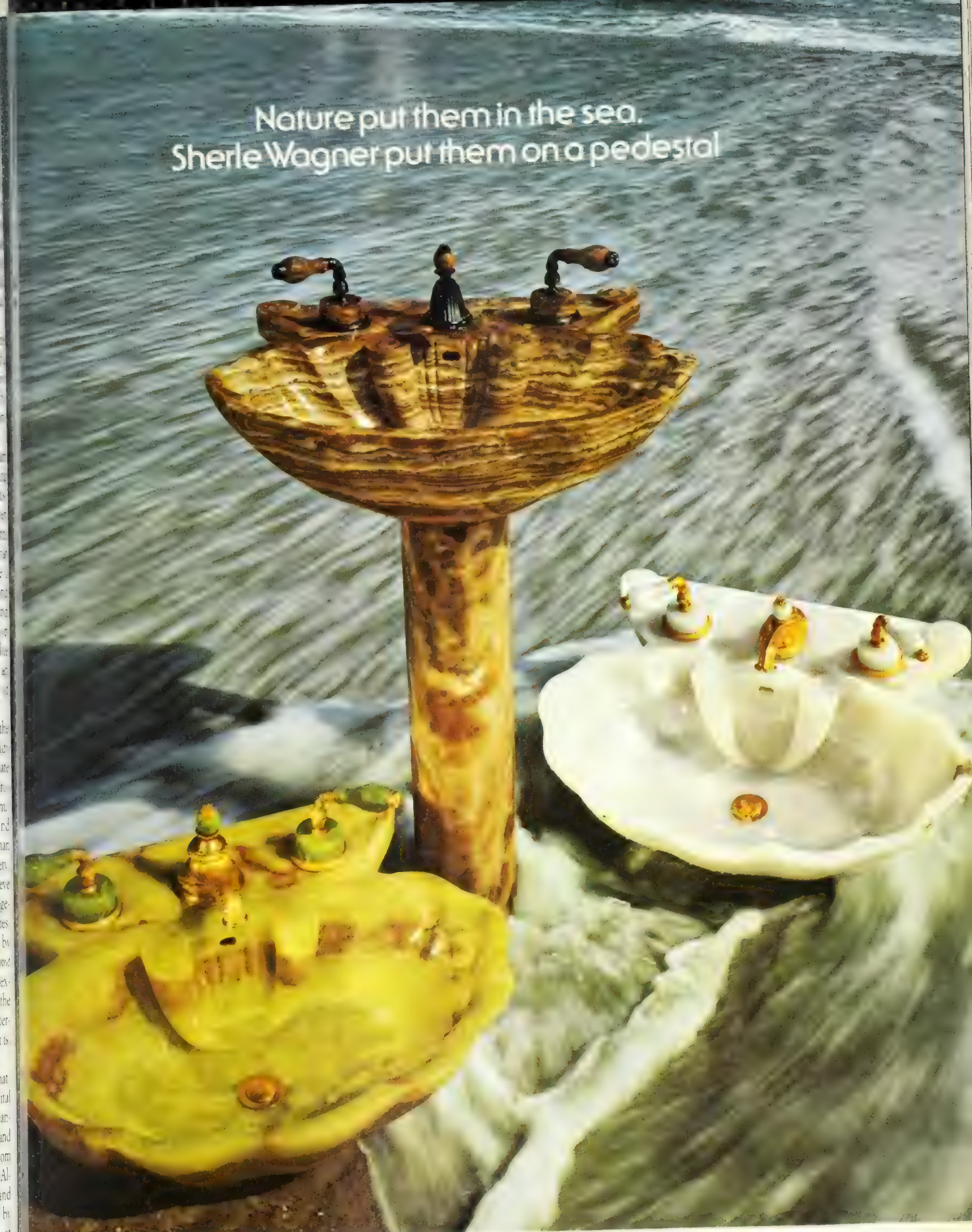
The new craftsworkers produce works that bring to issue the nature of objects. The qualities that identify one object as craft and another as art blur as woodworkers and metalworkers join and shape materials to resemble in all save function a chair or a table or a surveyor's tool.

They show us that clay need not be turned necessarily to the fine shape of a serviceable pot. Any material, whatever its history, can be transformed by human spirit to express human concerns and feelings.

When I look at any object at all—art or craft—I see through the distorting lenses of precept and determining distinctions, prejudices if you will, given to me by history. I have requirements that I have learned, expectations that must be met by the object before me. I know materials in certain contexts and am suspicious of them if they find shape somewhere else. I place value on an object or I assume it to have value simply because I recognize it to be an object with membership in a class of valuable objects, art or craft.

These valuable objects make up the subjects of art and craft as I study them. They fill the museums, illustrate the growth of our civilization, and provide markers along the corridors of human history that tell me what and where I am and have been as a human being, what we are about as a society, what we believe and know and believe we know. But, like some rare and genetically attenuated purebred species, art has been defined increasingly by negatives: art is *not* religion; art is *not* magic; art is *not* craft; art is *not* self-expression solely. No one is certain of the intellectual residue, the permitted territory, but wherever and whatever it is, it is art. We search for it.

I persist in believing that art—whatever it might be—is necessary, a vital part of our civilization and our humanity. For, like magic and religion and even superstition, art still flowers from its deepest roots in human needs. Although we do not fully understand them, those roots are being stirred by the probing and cultivating work of sophisticated craftworkers. Moreover, as I see it, many contemporary craftworkers are uniting art and craft in their objects. *(Continued on page 12)*



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(Continued from page 10) Here are objects that cannot be classified according to use. They flirt, however, with my recollections and expectation of function and I, in turn, consider freshly the nature of function and material. I just might know you, object before me, because I know others almost like you. No, insists the object, I am singular, individual; I must be known for myself and not through simplistic preconceptions, prejudices, and easy and dismissing classifications. You must know me, these objects say, even though you cannot name me. They require, thus, my best attention, clearest feelings, sharpest intelligence.

Well-wrought and intellectually quickened objects engage my mind. I look again at materials, at the treatment of the materials, at the parts that form the whole. As I look, I am aware of attitudes, of feelings, of pleasures and apprehensions that may be no more than reflections of my own greedy imagination. No matter. I return to first principles and ask again first questions: Who are you and how might I know you?

There, in those questions, where experience is not bottled as craft or advertised as art, I collaborate with the object in order to know it. In knowing it, I know better—if not perfectly—both art and craft. I know them well enough, finally, not to require that they live forever apart. And whatever else, I know that art and craft objects are at their best when they unsettle me, make me think, force me to question the old orders. □



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THE PRINCE REGENT

England's extravagant George IV had a lifelong obsession with things of beauty. But he paid a high price, in more ways than one.
By Martin Filler

He was the last medieval king of England, even though he died in 1830. Yet it is not as king, but rather as a prince, that he is most often remembered today. If his impact on British history as King George IV was negligible, then his sovereignty in all matters of taste as Prince Regent was supreme. And though his reign was still technically part of the Georgian period, it was his princely title that provided the name for the luxurious style that we now call Regency.

The British Crown, by and large, has not been distinguished in its patronage of the arts or in its leadership of taste. That has been especially true in the years since Queen Victoria, who transformed the monarchy from the flamboyant fief her Uncle George had enjoyed and made it into the essentially middle-class institution it remains to this day. Thus it is all the more remarkable to recall that the Prince Regent was the leading tastemaker of his time, exerting a strong influence on architecture, interior decorating, furniture design, portraiture, art and antiques collecting, entertaining, food, and manners. His rule over the fashionable world was as complete as his determination to enjoy all the pleasures of life,



Above: Miniature of the Prince Regent by Henry Bone after Lawrence, 1816. *Top, from left:* The Saloon at the Royal Pavilion at Brighton by John Nash, 1815–22; central dome of the Pavilion; and the Music Room, decorated by Frederick Crace and Firm.

the relentless pursuit of which became his ruling passion.

We must think of the Prince Regent first as the thwarted son of a father who, like the first two Georges before him, had thoroughly wretched relations with his heir, as has often been the case with kings whose eldest sons present them with an unwelcome reminder of their own impending mortality. The future George IV was born in 1762, but as Prince of Wales was kept out of any meaningful role in the affairs of state until his father, George III, was declared incurably insane in 1811. The Prince of Wales was thereupon proclaimed Prince Regent, at the age of 48, and at last became king on his father's death nine years later. Yet during the almost half-century of waiting he had been far from idle. The prince exploited to the hilt every royal prerogative and also cultivated several of the usual vices. Sex was not chief among them: he had a most uxorious attraction to other men's middle-aged wives, much like that of his descendant Edward VIII, who gave up the throne to marry one.

It was money that proved to be the Prince Regent's greatest weakness, and for most of his life he carried an enormous burden of debt that even several remunerative Acts of Parliament could only temporarily diminish. But unlike most other rakes of the day, his money was not mainly squandered at the gaming tables, but instead went largely toward the *(Continued on page 18)*


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(Continued from page 16) purchase of the rich, rare, and beautiful things to which he was addicted. An extremely proud man, he perhaps unconsciously hoped that those sumptuous objects would establish his validity, to himself as much as to the world, for he was painfully aware that although he could command privilege and demand deference, he possessed no real power. Yet despite that psychological motivation, there is no doubt that he was a genuine aesthete, a man moved to his innermost being by things of beauty.

It is worth noting, however, that the Regency style as it evolved under the prince's patronage was not the graceful, unadorned version—a kind of English Biedermeier—that we are familiar with from countrified copies of the London taste or the style's several revivals in architecture and interior design. The Prince Regent was not a man who believed that simplicity is the highest form of refinement, and he liked his possessions to be as opulent and showy as possible. Lush materials, heavy ornament, glittering finishes, and exaggerated proportions made much Regency design no less florid than that of the Victorian Era. The Prince Regent's style was calculated as a display of wealth and the image (if not the substance) of power, as much as the Baroque of Louis XIV had been.

Understandably, the prince was drawn to architecture, the most visible and grandiose of art forms, and he had a true mania to build. In London he commissioned everything from a temporary Chinese pagoda in St. James's Park, to the ambitious urban development scheme that included Regent Street and Regent's Park, to the extensive remodeling of Buckingham House into the Palace that is still much as he knew it.

If the Emperor Augustus could boast that he found Rome a city of brick and left it a city of marble, then George IV could say he found London a city of brick and left it a city of stucco. His favorite architect was John Nash, whose light version of Neoclassicism was claimed by some of his contemporary critics to be flimsy. True, there is a stage-set quality to the most famous ensemble Nash created, the series of large housing blocks surrounding Regent's Park. But the Nash Terraces, as they are now known, together with the park, epitomize the Classical ideal of *rus in urbe*—the country in the city.

By far the most memorable result of this fruitful collaboration between prince and architect was the fabled Royal Pavilion at Brighton. Begun in 1815 as the renovation of a fairly modest house in the fashionable seaside resort, it grew into a hugely expensive project that was finished seven years later. At the Royal Pavilion the Prince Regent's compulsiveness knew no bounds. It was estimated to have cost as much as £700,000, a staggering sum given that the gross national product of the kingdom in the year the prince came to the throne was only £74 million. If ever a stately pleasure dome



Elbow chair by Henry Holland in the Saloon of the Royal Pavilion at Brighton.

were decreed, this was it. A giddy, gaudy fantasia on Mughal architecture and Chinese interior design, it in fact resembles no known style in specific, and endures as an illogical law unto itself. The Royal Pavilion underwent two complete redecorations within six years, and one wing was redone four times in six months alone. The prince's prospering decorators, Frederick Crace and Firm, often dealt with their demanding client directly, as he took an intense interest in even the smallest details.

Yet within two years of the pavilion's completion he virtually abandoned it, returning only once again before he died. Like many irrational collectors, he often lost interest in an old acquisition soon after a new one was made. The fabulous Carlton House, his London residence as prince, was pulled down within a few years of his accession. After Buckingham Palace was finished, the expansion of Windsor Castle by the architect Sir Jeffry Wyatville became George IV's major (and final) architectural preoccupation, costing some £800,000 all told, or about $26 million in contemporary currency. The Prince Regent's attitude amounted to an early form of process architecture, in which the act of creation attained greater importance than the final product.

In the realm of art, he was the most serious British royal collector since Charles I, some of whose Old Master paintings, dispersed on the Continent after his beheading, the Prince Regent recovered and restored to the royal patrimony. The prince was particularly fond of 17th-century Dutch and Flemish painting, the new vogue for which began in Paris, and he bought works by Rembrandt van Rijn, Jakob Ruysdael, David Teniers the Younger, Sir Anthony Van Dyck, and Adriaen van Ostade. Among the artists of his own country, he liked Thomas Gainsborough and Sir Joshua Reynolds, though he detested his father's large collection of paintings by Benjamin West, which he somewhat tactlessly returned to the artist's family after West's death. As for his contemporaries, his repeated patronage virtually made the considerable fortune of Sir Thomas Lawrence, the facile portraitist who could always be depended on to turn out a flattering likeness. He needed to, for as he grew older, the extraordinarily vain Prince Regent was given to the use of wigs, false whiskers, and heavy greasepaint, and weighed as much as 250 pounds. (Wags irresistibly dubbed him "The Prince of Whales.") Obviously, the Prince Regent was also enormously fond of good food, and the great French chef Antonin Carême worked for him for a while.

The prince's ardent Francophilia was in part responsible for his appreciation of French 18th-century furniture, which had fallen from fashionable favor after the French Revolution. His discerning eye prompted him to buy several confiscated masterpieces from the French, including works by the 17th-century master André-Charles Boulle and the great 18th-century *ébénistes* Georges Jacob, Jean-Henri Riesener, and Adam Weisweiler. *(Continued on page 20)*



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Beautyrest Feelings™ By SIMMONS

(Continued from page 18) Sèvres porcelain was another of his great enthusiasms: he once sent an emissary to buy the Sèvres of his erstwhile friend Beau Brummell, impoverished and living in the debtor's haven of Calais, a gesture both generous and self-serving.

Some of the Prince Regent's charitable impulses were more noble. He commissioned a monument by the great Neoclassical sculptor Antonio Canova to the memory of his Catholic Stuart ancestors in St. Peter's in Rome, even though it predictably outraged English Anti-Papists. And when Pope Pius VII, robbed of the Vatican art treasures by Napoleon, offered them to the prince because the looted Papacy could not afford to ship the reclaimed works back to Rome from Paris, the Regent declined on principle but paid the freight charges himself. Likewise he was instrumental in the success of the expedition that brought the sculptures of the Parthenon to London, a controversial act that nonetheless saved the Elgin Marbles, now in the British Museum, from probable destruction.

But in an age of genuine national heroes—Lord Nelson and the Duke of Wellington above all—the Prince Regent was an unpopular figure among the English. The ostentatious rout he threw at Carlton House to celebrate his rise to the Regency (an indelicate excuse for a party to begin with, many thought, because of his father's sad state at the time) cost £120,000, the equivalent of almost $4 million in today's money for one night's entertainment of 2,000 guests. It earned him a chorus of abuse. His habitual extravagance and reactionary willfulness clearly did nothing to endear him to a nation that has always been rather suspicious of the arts in general and foreign influences in taste in particular.

A few years into his reign, George IV gradually withdrew from the public eye. Self-conscious of his bloated appearance and increasingly infirm, he became a virtual recluse at Windsor Castle, where he died at the age of 67, unmourned by his people. Sir Max Beerbohm wrote of the Prince Regent, "His life was a poem, a poem in praise of pleasure." In fact, his restless, excessive existence had been a great deal less than lyrical, but it was indeed devoted to the joys of all the senses. □



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THE ROOM AS KEEPSAKE

Records of a vanished past, watercolors of interiors are a rediscovered passion

By John Richardson



Watercolor of a *Viennese Drawing Room*, 1872, by Franz Alt

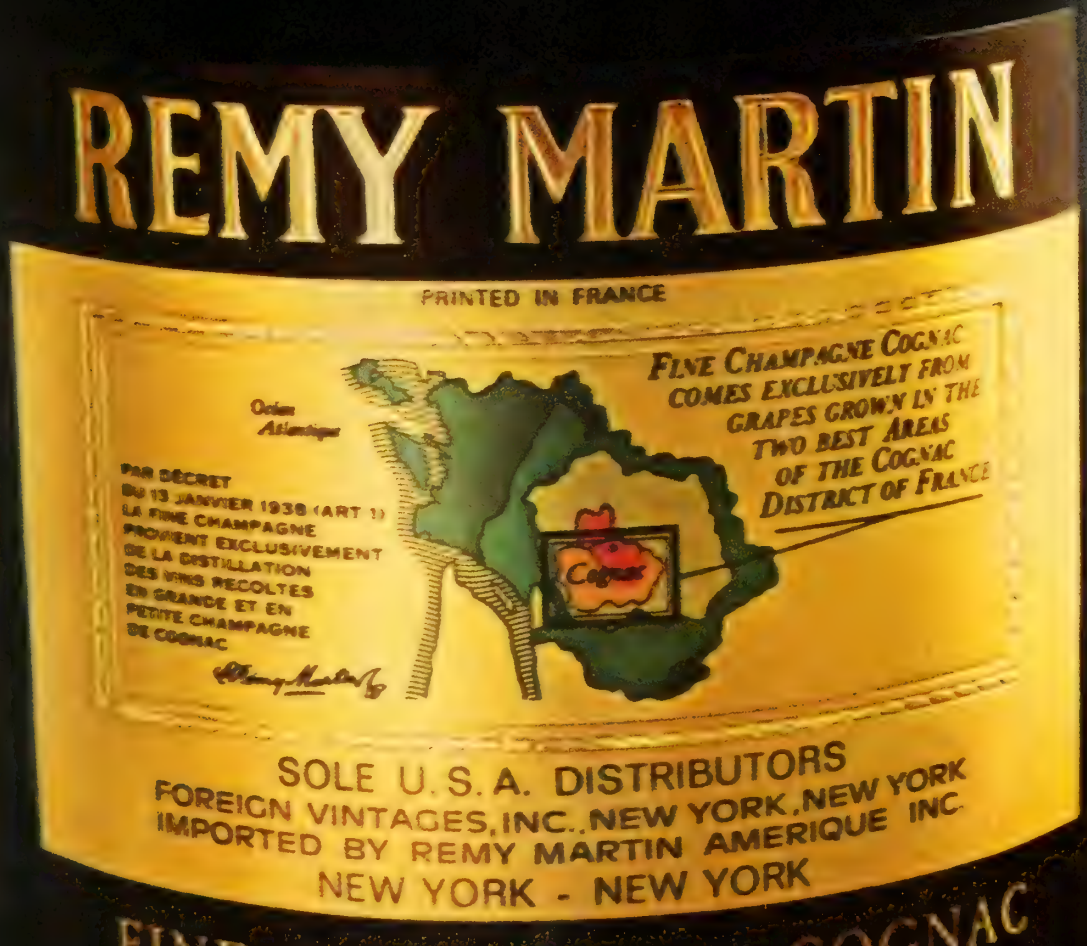
The fashion for 19th-century watercolors of domestic interiors was launched by the forgotten treasures that Mario Praz dug out of museums and noblemen's libraries and used as illustrations for his *An Illustrated History of Interior Decoration*. This pathfinding book (discussed in our January issue) confirmed a number of decorators—Mongiardino, Bennison, Denning, and Fourcade are some names that come to mind—in their taste for Neoclassical opulence. It also encouraged *cognoscenti* on both sides of the Atlantic as well as a few perspicacious dealers to snap up whatever examples came on the market. And for very little money. For instance, when Christies' Roman branch sold Baron Lemmermann's collection in the late '60s, some of the most attractive items illustrated in Mario Praz's book fetched no more than a few hundred dollars. In the last few years, however, their prices have risen at least tenfold.

The turning point came in the fall of 1980, when Sotheby's announced the sale in London of some highly finished views that Thomas Shotter Boys—one of the most gifted watercolorists of his day—had executed of the great Duke of Wellington's quarters at Apsley House and Walmer Castle. Given their exceptional quality and historic significance, these watercolors excited much interest. Too much interest! Thanks to all the brouhaha, members of the Wellington family persuaded the present Duke to withdraw nearly half of these hitherto unappreciated heirlooms from the sale. And the very few that ended up on the auctioneer's block were grabbed by the Victoria & Albert Museum. All of a sudden domestic interiors had become a very hot item.

A few months later, in November 1981, an enterprising London gallery, Hazlitt, Gooden and Fox, held what was probably the first show devoted to this newly recognized genre. Half the exhibits were British, half European. (There were no American examples, because they are rare and seldom much good.) Once again local enthusiasts who raced to the gallery on the appointed day were in for a disappointment. Well before the private view, U.S. collectors—ears to the ground as usual—had sneaked in and made off with the more desirable items. And the prices, formerly below $1,000, were now $10,000 and upwards for good examples—a lot considering that the artists were either minor figures, anonymous hacks, or amateurs.

Bear in mind, however, that this is one field of art where the amateur is often at something of an advantage. For, let's face it, commissioning a great painter to record a newly decorated room would be a bit like asking Horowitz to play "Chopsticks." And so if we want to know what Lord Egremont's great house, Petworth, looked like early in the 19th century, we turn to an amateurish member of his family, Mrs. Percy Wyndham, whose interiors are jampacked with period detail, rather than his resident genius, Turner, whose pared-down paintings of the selfsame rooms *(Continued on page 26)*

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(Continued from page 24) evoke light and atmosphere with incomparable magic but convey only the vaguest information about the décor.

If amateurishness does not constitute a failing, what exactly constitutes quality? Charm, of course; I also think an element of romantic snobbery should be taken into account. Watercolors that are a microcosm of a vanished way of life—aristocratic for preference—seem to be the most popular, partly because they appeal to the "I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls" syndrome. Why else would there be such a demand for watercolors of Prussian palaces, *hôtels particuliers* belonging to Rothschilds, Mediterranean villas built by grand-dukes for their mistresses? Especially covetable, it appears, are ones that feature summer retreats at Posillipo, with loggias overlooking the Bay of Naples, striped awnings framing a view of Vesuvius, and a powerful telescope for spying on royal yachts.

In the absence of other occupations, the portrayal of these rooms, once they were finished, was almost as rewarding as decorating them. And so the womenfolk, with or without the help of a drawing master, would fill album after album with records of improvements constantly being made to one or other of their properties. Additional records would be kept of the estates belonging to friends and relations that the family were forever visiting and the various residences that they were forever renting, from the Crimea to the Alpes Maritimes, Carlsbad to the Curragh.

We can best follow these aristocratic peregrinations in an album of watercolors (Don Agostino Chigi Collection, Rome) by artists of various nationalities. The album depicts rooms in great houses all over Europe lived in by Prince Sayn-Wittgenstein and his long-lived wife, Leonilla Barjatinskij (1816–1918), and it enables us to appreciate how universally popular Neoclassicism was in the first half of the 19th century and how little its characteristics changed from country to country. For identical items of decoration crop up in Paris and Naples, Berlin and St. Petersburg: striped cotton slipcovers that vanished in the fall; spear-shaped curtain poles elaborately draped with swags of fringed muslin; trellised room dividers wreathed in vines (Zimmerlauben); contorted two-seaters *(confidentes, causeuses, amorini)* contrived to promote dalliance or gossip. And everywhere those trademarks of the Biedermeier style: paisley shawls and sets of *bois clair* furniture. And then how colorful most of the rooms in this album are—all that saffron, coral, gentian, verdigris, gamboge! No question about it, the crucial role of color in 19th-century decoration is one of the revelations of the Sayn-Wittgenstein watercolors.

Brilliant color is likewise a revelation of the *Wittelsbacher Album*, which has recently been published by Prestel Verlag, Munich. This album consists of facsimiles of the 30 ravishing watercolors commissioned by the Bavarian royal family to commemorate certain



An interior at Howsham Hall, Yorkshire, c. 1830, by Mary Ellen Best.

interior and exterior views of Munich's Residenz and Nymphenburg Palace. Without a doubt one of the most enchanting publications of its kind, it is worth every cent of $300. However, a word of warning: so eye-fooling are the plates that unscrupulous dealers are already palming them off in fancy frames as originals.

Compared to Continental ones, watercolors of English houses are usually a bit dull, therefore less in demand. Amateurish, yet lacking in the charm that amateurishness is supposed to confer, they are apt to depict neat parlors, prim parsonages, genteel manor-houses. As that eminent art historian K.T. Parker used to say: "There is only one thing more depressing than an English watercolor, and that's a *faded* English watercolor."

There are, of course, exceptions, as witness many of the charming works that illustrate John Cornforth's *English Interiors (1790–1848)*, another book that uses domestic interiors of the period as opposed to photographs to trace the history of furnishing. I should also mention the group of 47 watercolors by a gifted amateur from Yorkshire, Mary Ellen Best, included in Sotheby's sale of architectural drawings and interiors held in New York last month. M. E. Best rates higher than most of her ilk; a sharp eye for social nuances enabled her to differentiate between the Palladian grandeur of her family's English residences and the Biedermeier austerity of her German husband's bourgeois rooms. To my mind the German ones are better. Incidentally, this collection was inherited by M. E. Best's grandson Tony Sarg, the famous puppeteer who designed the first ballons for the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

The end of the 19th century saw the end of the fashion for recording interiors in watercolor. The fault lay partly with photography for taking over the requirements of topography, partly with the compulsion—nature's irresistible lure—that prompted the lady watercolorist to forsake her Hepplewhite worktable for an easel in the garden. Since it coincided with the Victorian cult of sentimentality and prettiness, this move engendered a lot of saccharine daubs. And the amateur tradition fizzled out in a cascade of kitsch—vignettes of bluebell dells and autumn tints and dovecotes smothered in too much eglantine. By 1900 the sharp, clean colors that had been such a feature of work executed earlier in the century had dissolved in mauvish mist.

To judge by most contemporary attempts to portray interiors, there seems little point in trying to breathe new life into a tradition that is as dead as stump-work. In these frantic times no one has the time or the patience, let alone the dedication or skill, to tackle such arduous tasks as getting the pattern of a carpet into correct perspective or coming up with a convincing pictorial formula for a hundred place settings. This is the more regrettable, because the candid eye of the gifted amateur reveals far more about the flavor and charm of life in a specific room of a specific house at a specific period—far more, that is to say, about social history—than most of today's photography. □

Christian Dior

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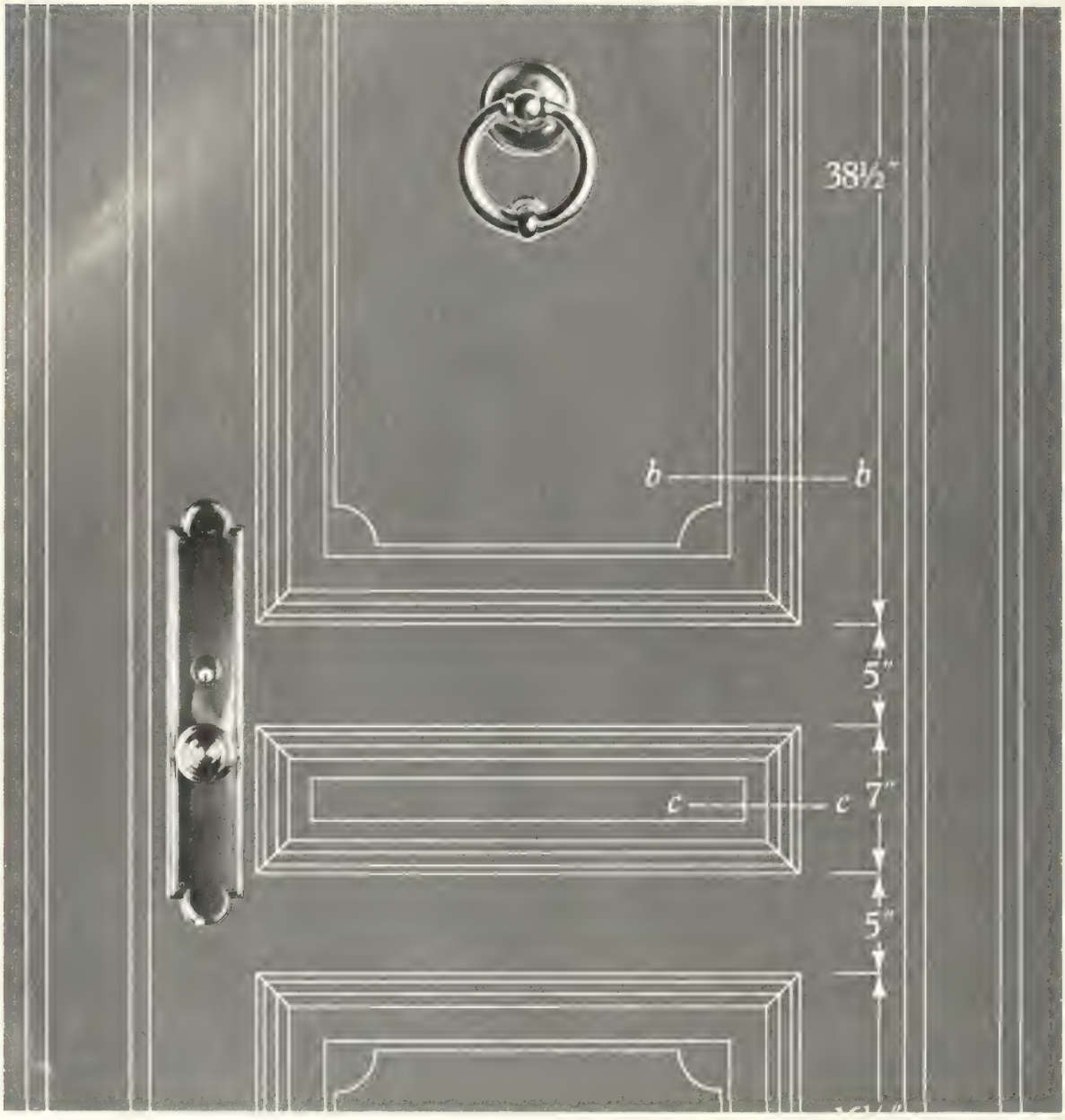


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LOUISBURG SQUARE

On Boston's Beacon Hill, "the hub of the Hub" remains much as its designers planned it over 150 years ago

By Christopher Gray

"The hub of the Hub," poet Robert Lowell called it, and if Boston's Beacon Hill has a center, then Louisburg Square is surely it. Virtually unchanged since its construction between 1834 and 1847, the Square has become the epitome of Bostonian propriety and wealth, having escaped the invasion of tall apartments that have so changed Beacon Street. The Square itself is a long, thin park, perhaps 40 by 200 feet, surrounded by a chest-height iron railing, private cobblestone streets, and three- and four-story-high Greek Revival houses. At either end, Mt. Vernon and Pinckney streets carry through traffic, and the residents' parked cars sometimes dominate the view, but Louisburg Square is the oldest intact first-class residential enclave in the Northeast.

In 1795, Massachusetts decided to relocate the Statehouse from crowded, "downtown" Boston up to the foot of Beacon Street, where the empty, hilly pasture of Beacon Hill began. Several of Boston's prominent citizens, including Statehouse architect Charles Bulfinch and lawyer Harrison Gray Otis, formed a partnership to develop the Hill with large "mansion houses." A few such buildings, like Bulfinch's house at 89 Mount Vernon for Otis, were actually built, but after 1810 more economical rowhouse development took over.

Louisburg Square, based on an earlier, larger scheme by Bulfinch, was laid out in 1826, by which date it covered the last large undeveloped parcel left on the Hill. Instead of an overall, simultaneous development, individual lots were slowly sold off, beginning in 1834. The first to build was one John Clark, an insurance executive who put up No. 21, and gradually master builders and a few architects (but not Bulfinch) put up the 29 trim brick rowhouses, most of them 24 feet wide.

Each of the homeowners—called Proprietors—owns the street in front of his or her house, and today, each has the privilege of ejecting errant automobiles—as well as shoveling snow, since the city plows do not venture into this private precinct. After the annual Proprietors' meeting of 1845, the black iron fence went up, complete with its near-invisible access gate, and in 1852, two statues were installed—Columbus at one end, Aristides the Just at the other. At the same meeting the Proprietors thought it wise to promulgate a new rule: "No boy or boys be allowed to enter the enclosure of the Square on any pretext whatsoever . . . or meddle with any embellishments." But children have been known to scale the fence for games.

Since then, things have moved at a leisurely pace on Louisburg Square—a finger broken off Columbus in the 1880s, a temporary voting booth put up one election day around 1910, and minor changes on various houses—so slowly that if the parked cars were replaced by carriages, you would be able to slip back to Bulfinch's Boston with ease.

The Square has had its discrete sprinkling of celebrities: soprano Jenny Lind, architect Russell Sturgis, author Louisa May Alcott, William Dean Howells (while he edited the *Atlantic Monthly*), and even poet Robert Frost in 1940–42. But do not look for the popular idea of Boston society here; there have been no Cabots, no Lowells, no Lodges but instead a steady succession of Hornblowers, Motleys, Abbotts, Masons, Sortwells, and similar solid Boston stock.



Louisburg Square's iron gate was installed in 1845, its statues seven years later

The senior Louisburg Square householder is Mrs. E. Sohier Welch, in residence at No. 20 (where Jenny Lind in 1852 married her manager) since 1926. "When I first got here, the center mall had no planting, just trees and grass. I formed what I called the 'lilac lobby' to put in plantings. Everyone agreed except one gentleman, whom I won't name, and every year when the forsythia bloomed he would telephone me and say, 'When *will* that vulgar

Continued, page 32



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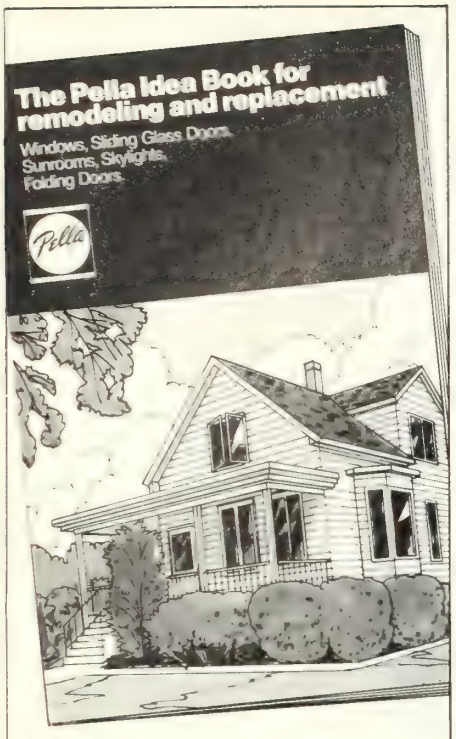
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(*Continued from page 30*) yellow end?' "

But don't expect to actually see anyone *in* the mall, except an occasional cat worrying the squirrels. "One would feel a little awkward being out there and just being looked at from all around, don't you think?" Who can challenge her view? After all, the first Welch moved onto Louisburg Square in 1836.

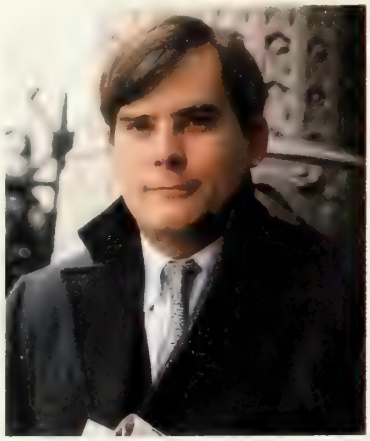
Another resident clearly recalls, as if speaking of snow in July, that "somebody actually got married in the center, and after that there was a good deal of talk." The "talk" that the actual use of the green in Louisburg Square provoked is perhaps the best reason to visit the Square, since it illuminates for the outsider the traditional attributes of Beacon Hill—polite, elegant, gracious, but also reserved and private. Although for Mrs. Welch "we're all very friendly; it's like living in a small village," for another longtime resident "it's delightful—you never really see your neighbors, exept to say 'hello.' "

How has Louisburg Square survived so apparently untouched? In the past, the repeated fires in downtown Boston (up through 1872), as well as the tradition of creating new land by filling in coves, made unnecessary the expansion of the business district beyond the Statehouse into Beacon Hill. Too, the later development of the adjacent Back Bay (1860–70) reinforced the centrality of Beacon Hill. Finally there is in Boston a much stronger tradition of urban single-family residences than in, say, New York, where the comparable Gramercy Park was long ago taken over by apartment houses.

Indeed, for the traveler, the daily routine is as essential to understanding the Square as is its architecture or greenery. In the morning, the brass polisher for the metalwork and day servants arrive. Bankers and lawyers stride down their steps and then up Beacon Hill to their jobs beyond the Statehouse, sometimes with wobbly, school-bound children in hand. Then the tradesmen begin to arrive in their spanking-clean panel trucks, intent on their mission to fix a molding or install a bookshelf. The milkman comes by around 10, and then the tourists tentatively stumble through. They marvel at the soft morning light on the rounded fronts, but they wonder at the reserved quiet of the square. Is this really it? It doesn't seem quite . . . *luxe* enough. Is there a plaque somewhere? In the afternoon, commerce may invade temporarily. "The thing that distresses us all is that the Square has become the snob place to advertise," says Mrs. Welch. "You often see a young girl on the steps of No. 22 being photographed with a car or whatever."

In the evening, the professionals return home from work, walking *down* Beacon Hill this time, and children chase around the block (but never in the Square!), engrossed in the before-dinner games of 10-year-olds. Residents tinker with their parking arrangements to accommodate a houseguest, or gruffly warn an interloper, "Oh yes, you'd be towed immediately, out to Brighton, I think. Say, try Charles Street."

Soon the softly darkened bowfronts stand out against the twilight sky. Lights in dormer windows go on, and also on the parlor floors. Through the wide, low windows are just what you expect to see—lace curtains, simple Greek Revival interiors, silver, crystal chandeliers—the ingredients of Louisburg Square living. Soon you feel you are intruding, and you avert your eyes. Later, dinner guests or cooks leave, "goodnights" are said, doors close, and the Square settles down to sleep, an old hand at this daily cycle, now midway through its second century. □



CHRISTOPHER GRAY

Christopher Gray will write All the Best Places, profiles of America's most distinguished residential enclaves. He is director of the Office for Metropolitan History in New York, a consulting firm specializing in the history of real estate and architecture. He is the author of *Blueprints: 26 Extraordinary Structures.*



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THE TABLES TURNED

A famous New York editor prepares a feast for a celebrated California restaurateur

By Jason Epstein

Because it was his birthday and because he had arranged for his autobiography to be published on the same day, Craig Claiborne, the cookbook author who is also food editor of *The New York Times,* gave himself a party late last summer at his East Hampton house on Long Island's South Fork. To feed his two or three hundred guests he invited some 30 or 40 chefs from all over the country, and to record the celebration his publisher had arranged for the networks to send their camera crews. The idea was that there should be something for everybody—food, people, publicity.

The day was cool, clear, and bright—the South Fork at its best. The chefs with their concoctions were arranged around the perimeter of a huge yellow and white striped tent, stirring and slicing as they awaited the guests who would arrive within the hour. Outside, a goat turned on a spit. Two genial Southerners in shirtsleeves were frying catfish and hushpuppies in a kettle of hot oil over a propane stove, the sun glinting from their rimless glasses. Paul Prudhomme, the Cajun chef, was cooking redfish behind a cloud of smoke that billowed each time he dropped a butter-soaked fillet into his red-hot skillet. A local jazz band was warming up. From the tent a few early guests emerged, their plates laden with unearthly combinations of Chinese noodles, tacos, chocolate truffles, bouillabaisse, roast veal with tuna mayonnaise, petits fours, turkey mole.

I was there for two reasons: first because Craig is a friend and a neighbor but also because one of the chefs he had invited was my friend Alice Waters, who runs Chez Panisse in Berkeley, California. The plan was for Alice to spend the weekend with me at my house in Sag Harbor. I would look after her for the weekend and see that she got to Craig's on Saturday morning in time for the party.

To say that I admire Alice is to miss the point, for I like to cook and Alice's dishes had inspired in me a kind of fanatical devotion. More than a friend, I had become a convert, and it was with a convert's zeal that I drove her over the back roads to Craig's—roads whose overarching trees reminded her, she told me, of England. On her lap sat the dish that she had brought with her from California, a huge platter of roasted peppers—shades of red, yellow, orange, green, chocolate brown, which in their shingled pattern, streaked with silvery California anchovies, looked like a Missoni sweater or an edible autumn landscape.



Restaurateur Alice Waters among arugola, red leaf, and mâche.

By the time we arrived most of the other chefs had taken their posts behind their stews and roasts and trays of pastries, and soon the guests were streaming down Craig's driveway by the dozen, more, I guessed, than he had counted on. Before long, Alice, in her little two-piece white dress, her black velvet cloche pulled down over one eye, was lost in the throng. Since I am not happy in a crowd, and since I knew that Alice would find her way back to Sag Harbor with a friend who lived nearby, I left.

I left with no misgivings. For me the point of the weekend was not so much Craig's gastronomic olympiad as the dinner I had made the night before for Alice and a few friends. What I had wanted to do was show Alice the great variety and quality of our local ingredients, especially the late summer fish and vegetables. Alice's genius as a cook begins with her obsession with ingredients. She tends to avoid sauces and stuffings and glazes and odd juxtapositions in the nouvelle manner and instead penetrates to the essence—the soul, you might say—of a quail or an oyster or even of a sack of flour or a bottle of oil. In some mysterious way, Alice's ingredients speak to her so that her cooking is like a dialogue with them, from which heretofore unsuspected meanings surprisingly emerge. My idea was that the splendid produce from our fields and local waters would prove so seductive she might think of leaving her place in Berkeley and of opening a restaurant here on Long Island, or at least consider setting up an outpost here. Then I could have Alice's food whenever I wanted. I knew how loyal Alice was to her local ingredients and, of course, to Chez Panisse itself, to which she had devoted herself for the past 10 years. Even so, my zeal—or greed—was such that I would gladly have stolen her, if I could, from the people and places she loved.

Though my seduction failed and Alice is back in Berkeley I like to think that maybe I haven't failed completely. Long Island's late summer abundance is truly miraculous, and who knows what memories Alice may still have of teeming tanks of lobsters, or plump chickens, their skin the color of ivory, which only the day before had been scratching for grain on Sal Iacono's farm; of baskets of mussels, some no bigger than olives, others the size of hen's eggs, of *(Continued on page 36)*



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(Continued from page 34) oysters, and sweet corn and squash.

By Friday afternoon we had done our shopping for the dinner that I was to serve that night—had been to the Green Thumb, the best of our farmstands, and to the Seafood Shop for swordfish, striped bass, and mussels, for lobsters and clams; and to Saverio Maclerios's Italian sausage shop for homemade smoked mozarella and sun-dried tomatoes. Afterwards, we had driven the 20 miles to Montauk, the fishing village at the end of the island. A great white shark was hanging by its tail from the 30-foot scaffold where Montauk fishermen display their trophies. Because it looked so shiny and sleek in the sun, Alice thought it couldn't be real, had to be a Disney shark. But I explained to her that by late summer we have no end of sharks here, attracted for the same reason as the fishermen themselves: the local waters are full of squid and bluefish, giant tuna and the smaller albacore, weakfish, whiting, and monkfish, to say nothing of sole and fluke and lobsters by the boatload.

By early afternoon Alice and I were back in Sag Harbor and had piled our purchases on my old pine kitchen table. For the first time I began to think seriously of what to do about dinner. My idea was to let the ingredients decide the menu. Heaped around the kitchen were bell peppers in several colors, white and purple eggplants, yellow and white peaches—the white ones filling the kitchen with their fragrance, and bunches of yellow dahlias and blue and white statice. There were dozens of clams, littlenecks no bigger than 50-cent pieces; smoked eels and mussels, a half dozen very small lobsters, a five-pound chicken, a dozen brown eggs; five or six swordfish steaks, a side of striped bass; filleted smoked bluefish, bunches of chervil and cilantro, a basket of tomatoes and a few pounds of potatoes, just dug and no bigger than ping-pong balls; a heap of slim, dark green haricot beans, four or five kinds of lettuce, green and purple basil, some apples—dusty red macouns and russets the color of sand.

What came of all this was not so much a dinner that I had cooked as a kind of culinary pageant in which these ingredients, or most of them, spoke their own parts, *(Continued on page 38)*

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(*Continued from page 36*) for Alice's influence pervaded the kitchen, even though I did the cooking, or most of it. By the time the guests began to arrive around eight, the smoked eel and bluefish were on the kitchen table along with the littlenecks, which I had grilled under some chopped red and green bell peppers, a little garlic, some lemon juice and bacon. There was also a plate of smoked mozarella and dried tomatoes. The first course of lobster, bass, and mussels we had in the dining room, followed by grilled swordfish, glazed on top and sliced like a beefsteak, accompanied by the haricot beans, tossed in butter with a few leaves of tarragon and sprinkled with a handful of yellow corn kernels. Since the evening turned cold, we lit the fire in the kitchen fireplace and Alice threw into it some of the new potatoes, buttered and wrapped in foil. Later, when we had drunk the last of the Chardonnay, and finished our sorbet made of local muskmelon, I brought out a tarte tatin, made from the apples we had bought from the Halsey's orchard earlier that day, and as an afterthought, a bowl of white peaches, peeled and sliced with some créme Anglaise.

It's been a few months since Alice's visit, and I'm told by one of her friends that she still talks about the time we sat in the garden—it must have been just after we returned from our shopping trip and before we began to think about dinner—and ate lobster salad stuffed into frankfurter rolls with a few capers strewn on top, a roadside treat well known in these parts but a surprise to strangers like Alice. I can still recall the glow of pleasure that came across her face when she first tasted this perfectly exquisite, perfectly commonplace little sandwich. She told me that she wanted to serve these lobster rolls in her cafe, one flight up from Chez Panisse itself, where the food is simpler and cheaper than it is downstairs. But I know what a lobster costs by the time it gets from the Atlantic all the way out to California and I doubt Alice will manage. If she wants a lobster roll on her menu, she'd better come East. □

Jason Epstein is the vice-president and editorial director of the trade division of Random House.



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MAKING ART NOUVEAU NEWS

While the runaway Tiffany lamp market settles down, its doyenne, Lillian Nassau, passes the scepter to her son

By Elaine Greene

Tiffany lamps: Japanese variety stores sell paper versions. Gaudy glass imitations hang among the singles-bar ferns. The real thing—utterly inimitable—is still being sought by those who can afford a lamp as expensive as a Mercedes-Benz or a small house. Yet 25 years ago, most of the lamps Louis Comfort Tiffany made between the 1890s and the 1920s had been consigned by fickle fashion to dusty attics, basements, barns, and even trash piles. Lillian Nassau knows a story about Tiffany that makes her wince every time she tells it. In bankruptcy in 1935, two years after the death of its founder, the New York Tiffany factory held an auction of its remaining stock. Many buyers of the glorious leaded-glass shades, Mrs. Nassau recounts, took them out to the sidewalk and, then and there, smashed them and removed the lead to sell for scrap.



Lillian and Paul Nassau behind the Tiffany lamps at the center of their shop

Lillian Nassau Ltd. is a big, beautiful, densely stocked shop at 220 East 57th Street in New York. It sells Art Nouveau and Art Deco furniture, jewelry, paintings, posters, bronzes, enamels, ceramics, silver, and glass of other designers and makers, but Tiffany is the name collectors think of when the shop is mentioned. Paul Nassau, Lillian Nassau's son and longtime partner, took over the management of the business this past autumn, and he intends to keep the strong Tiffany emphasis. He says, "The name Lillian Nassau is synonymous with Tiffany at this point, not just here but in Europe, Japan, and Latin America. That connection must continue or we might as well change our name."

Lillian Nassau, who decided to retire at age 82, remains available as consultant to her son and his staff. She is widely acknowledged as a prime mover in the international revival of interest in Art Nouveau that began in the 1950s. At that time she owned a shop on New York's Third Avenue and was selling 18th- and 19th-century furniture and objects. One day a certain 1900 Majorelle cabinet came into her hands, and she thought it strange and wonderful—Art Nouveau furniture was as much in eclipse as Tiffany glass. A cabinetmaker she consulted found, to his amazement, that it was as meticulously crafted as a Louis XV museum piece. With the help of books of the period—the shop's library is now large, scholarly, and choice—she identified the piece and began to look here and abroad for more work of the epoch. This search led her to her greatest love, Tiffany glass—the leaded lamps and windows, the iridescent flower-form vessels. The shop began to attract a group of customer/friends whom she still praises as her mentors, including Greta Daniel of the Museum of Modern Art, artist and collector Joseph H. Heil, designer Edward Wormley, and professor and collector Edgar Kaufmann Jr. Along with Mrs. Nassau and her tastemaker mentors, museum shows also fueled the revival: a 1958 Tiffany exhibit at the New York Museum of Contemporary Crafts, an Art Nouveau show in 1960 at the Museum of Modern Art.

By the late 1960s Lillian Nassau's 57th Street shop was a stop on the jet-set itinerary. An Italian film idol might have to wait his turn while one or another of the Beatles concluded his dealings. The record for multiple purchases (lamps by the half-dozen) would be held now by a Texas oil baron, now by a Japanese banker.

At its go-go peak, the Tiffany market went as crazy as gold or fine art, especially at auction. In early 1979, the Nassaus sold an American film actress a large spiderweb lamp for $70,000. Two and a half weeks later, a similar spiderweb lamp came up at Christie's and sold for $125,000. In March 1980, a third spiderweb lamp sold at auction, this time for $360,000. When that news reached the shop, Paul Nassau remembers, his mother paced the floor in great distress, saying "No lamp is worth that money. No lamp is worth a third of a million dollars!"

The Nassaus never raised their prices to match or even approach what they considered auction excesses, although they had to adjust to inflated costs. And the day came, in October 1981, when the bubble burst. At a chilling auction sale, one Tiffany lamp after another failed to meet the reserve—the price the consigner and the auction house agreed will be the lowest accepted. The Nassau shop is always a hive of *(Continued on page 44)*


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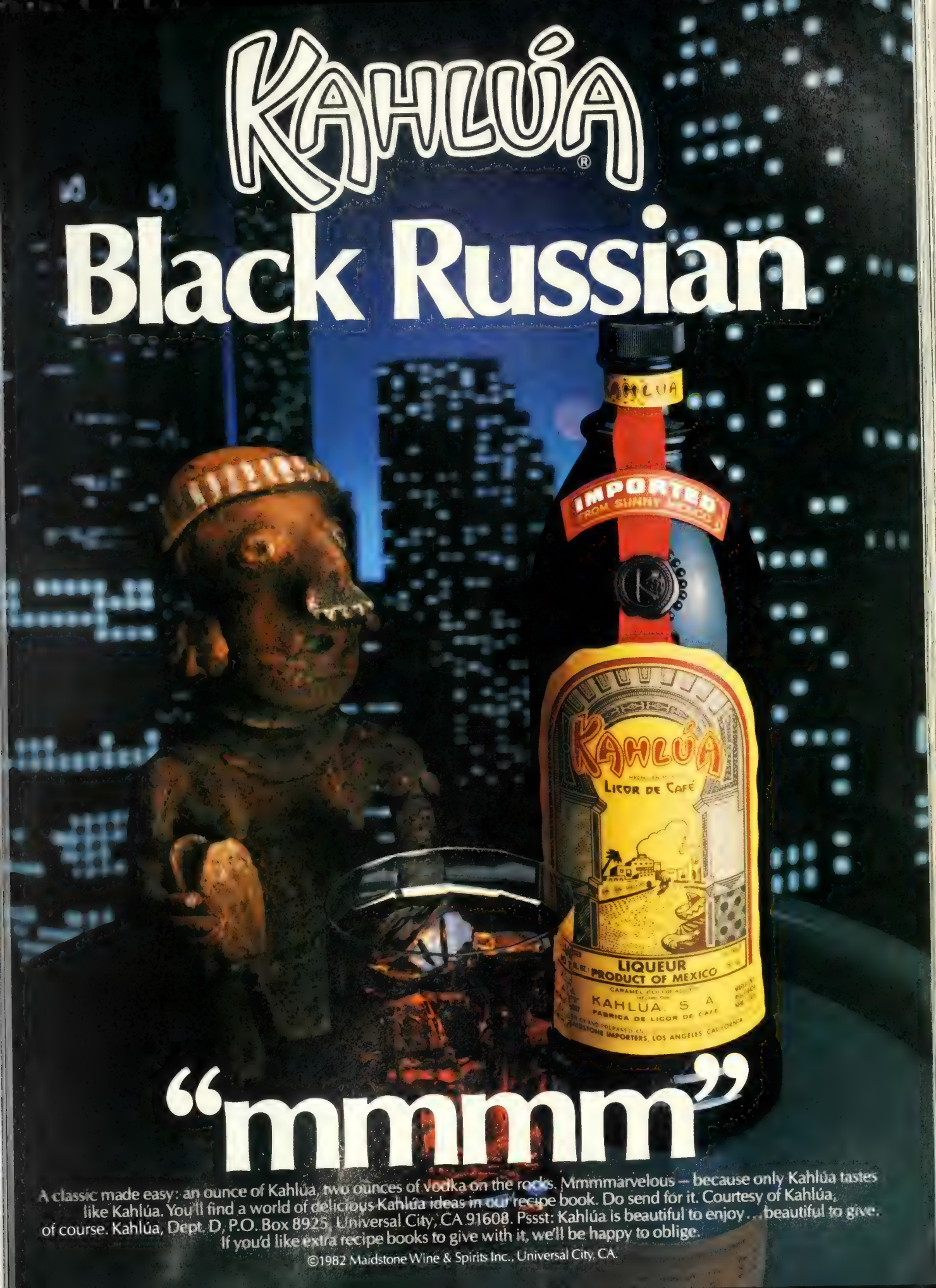
(Continued from page 42) activity after an auction, where fellow dealers meet to compare notes. On this October day, the staff remembers, the first to arrive was a woman who announced at the threshold, "The party's over." The market has been quiet, though far from inactive, ever since.

Paul Nassau welcomes the settling down, saying, "People see prices come down and they think the business is dying, when all it is doing is becoming more realistic. The drop can hurt people who bought decorative arts as an investment, but we never encouraged that." Lillian Nassau, when asked to recommend a good investment in her store, would refer the questioner to his or her broker—with some irritation, observers say.

The people Lillian Nassau would advise most enthusiastically were those who shared her deep pleasure in Art Nouveau—in "the discipline of the craftsmanship and the sinuousness of the forms," as she puts it. "Collectors, whether they are experienced or beginners, must put themselves in the right hands. They need an honest opinion from a reliable dealer. If you want Russian icons, you go to A La Vieille Russie; if you want silver, you go to James Robinson. For Art Nouveau, you come to us. My son and I have always tried to give our customers more than just merchandise. I want to be sure a purchased piece is understood and loved as much as it deserves to be." □



Sarah Bernhardt portrait is the center of a c. 1898 brooch by Alphonse Mucha, part of the Nassau jewelry collection.



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David Somerset and his wife, Lady Caroline, carry on a grand tradition of English county living with hounds, hunters, and great sporting paintings in The Cottage, at Badminton, Gloucestershire

THE COUNTY LIFE

BY ALAN PRYCE-JONES
PHOTOGRAPHS BY HORST

For over 300 years the English country house has had a good name. True, as the human race came to ask more and more in the name of creature comfort the disadvantages of English living were noted with increasing ruefulness. The drafts, seeping and billowing through tapestried walls, the extreme heat of the fire in the great hall contrasted with the icy cold of every chair beyond four feet of it, the sheer weight of the food, the liverish sweetness of too much claret and port struck a discordant note. But compared with French houses, which were too formal, German houses, which were dull, and Italian houses, which were anything but cozy—too hot in summer and too frigid in winter—the English country house usually struck visitors as delightfully livable.

Travelers like Celia Fiennes and Arthur Young visited it with awe, foreign enthusiasts like Georg Christoph *(Continued on page 54)*





Tom Parr's red-and-white scheme for the dining room is reflected in the mirror over the mantel. Against red lacquer walls, linen slipcovers initialed in red needlepoint by Lady Caroline cover the chairs. *Opposite:* The garden side of The Cottage, also known as The Dower House, with springer spaniels Mabel and Lotte on the lawn.





Lichtenberg and Prince Pückler-Muskau admired the amenities of the countryside from century to century. Jane Austen and Emily Eden were not alone to immortalize its inhabitants. And when the industrial revolution heaped huge fortunes on the British middle classes, their first thought was to imitate the ducal builders of Chatsworth and Blenheim by sending for a fashionable architect and commissioning a truly impressive "gentleman's seat." There are several published sets of engravings to show off this opulence—J. P. Neale's *Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen* is the most famous. Building went on even after the end of the first World War.

One by one, the surviving palaces have become museums, reflections of a bygone lifestyle, their state rooms fenced off by ropes to keep the visiting public from fingering Christmas cards of the Queen in monogrammed silver frames.

The shrinkage of the English country house saw a corresponding change in the life of the owners. Until 1939 and World War II, the country attracted more noblemen and gentlemen than did the city. To amuse their wives, they spent a few months celebrating the London season at Ascot or Henley; they graced the Eton and Harrow Match and the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race; they gave balls; they visited Le Touquet for the weekend. But their chosen life was lived on the moors, in the estate office, cub-hunting with the North Warwickshire, dove-shooting, planting avenues.

Until the 1950s. For 30 years now, life in the country, when it involves more than a cottage, has come to mean constant anxiety. Only a long way from London—in Northumbria or Scotland, or Wales—is it possible to pretend that a pale reflection of Edwardian living can persist, with the help of willing villagers, still on hand to come to the rescue of a local patriarch, who would otherwise be forced himself to polish his still-unburgled silver and edge his own lawns.

Of course there are exceptions. A handful of great houses still exist not staffed as they were once, not lived in so conspicuously, more dependent than in old days on money earned elsewhere—it is many decades since a country estate could be counted on to pay for itself. But there are grouse-moors still shot over, salmon rivers still fished, stables and harness rooms still in commission, garden oases still untrampled. Among the oases that survive is Badminton House, in Gloucestershire, the home of *(Continued on page 61)*



Preceding pages: The garden's many hedges of yew, holly, and Portuguese laurel, some 200 years old, others planted in 1964, create gates, doorways, and rooms—one of which holds the swimming pool. *Right:* The café-au-lait front hall with sporting gear for all seasons: walking sticks, hunting caps, raincoats, cloaks, and chaps; bowls are for dog leashes and car keys.







Right: Smoke from the fire burning summer and winter has given the library walls a rich parchment color; bookshelves line the walls, green curtains are like those created by Nancy Lancaster and John Fowler for Ditchley. The quilt on the table is by Lady Caroline, who is speaking to one of her spaniels. *Above:* A butler's table in the library holds 37 vases of phlox, pansies, violets, lavender, marjoram, dill, verbena, tobacco plant, and green foxglove. Needlepoint stools by Lady Caroline hold magazines. *Below:* A collection of stirrup irons in the stables run by manager Brian Higham.









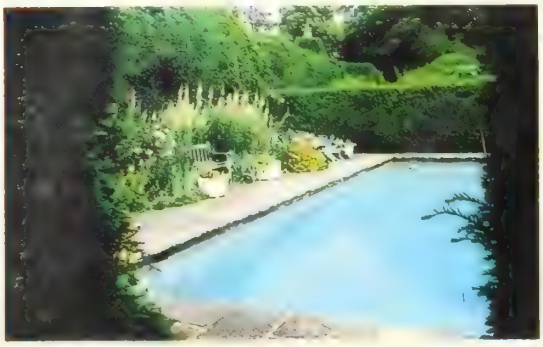


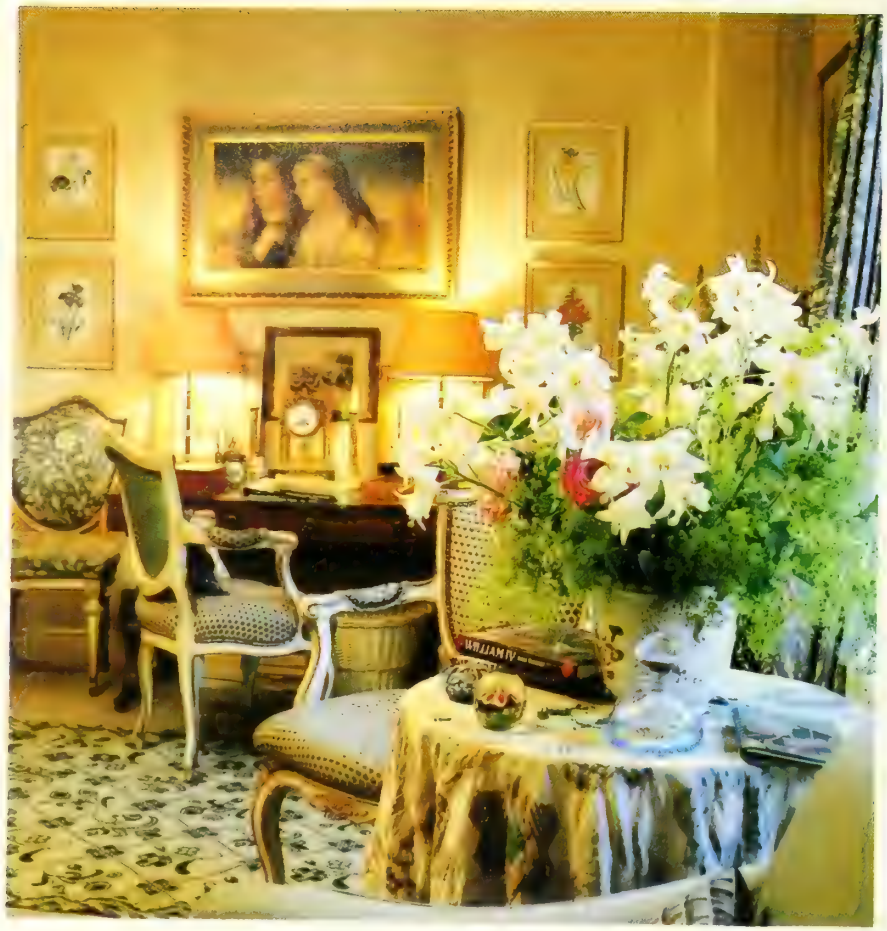
(Continued from page 54) the Duke of Beaufort. You can go and look at it if you want to; you can walk through it, but only for some weeks of the summer and for part of each Wednesday afternoon. What you will find is a stately baroque house, partly built in the reign of Charles II and partly enlarged by William Kent 70 years later. Kent, by the way, was also the architect of the House Guards Parade in London, of a great Norfolk house, Holkham Hall, and a designer who changed the face of landscape gardening in his time.

This part of Gloucestershire is domestic rather than scenically exciting. But you will find a splendid park at Badminton. And you will also find, nearby, a Dower House, known as The Cottage, lived in by the Duke's heir, David Somerset, and his wife, Lady Caroline. The Beauforts have no children, and so it is appropriate that the Duke's cousin, David, shares the sporting interests that have persisted through generations of Somersets. He has enlarged his field by accepting the chairmanship of Marlborough Fine Arts, and so developing an active interest in one of the leading art galleries of the world. Thus you may watch the arrival not only of a horse-box at the Cottage but also of a helicopter on the international business of selling an important Impressionist collection.

The Cottage has been described by a friend of the family as the quintessential English country house, as opposed to a palace. It rambles, it improvises. Lady Caroline has used the advice of Tom Parr, and it is well known that what she does is much admired and imitated. Big logs are always burning on cozy open hearths. In the dining room the chairs are embellished by Lady Caroline's embroidery. And just as at the Badminton House itself the stables are almost more cherished than the living quarters, so at the Cottage everything turns on the gardens, which are designed, in part, as enclosures filled with old-fashioned roses—enclosures that Lady Caroline has described as "different rooms leading into one another," so that they serve as an extension of the house itself. David Somerset has collaborated with his wife on the garden, with the added help of the doyen of English garden designers, Russell Page. *(Continued on page 162)*

Preceding pages: Behind the great house built in 1680, with cupolas added later by William Kent, huntsman Brian Gupwell stands among the hounds bred for their special pale coats. *Left:* Tea caddy lamps flank John Wootton's painting of a stallion, one of five in the dining room of the Duke's favorite horses in frames designed by Kent. *Below:* The swimming pool with its yellow, silver, and white border.







Right: Ceremonial harnesses for driving horses flank the stable clock. *Above:* The blue-and-white sitting room with a French print fabric. Sisal is on the floor as in all the downstairs rooms, here covered by a Portuguese rug; floral watercolors, one a Fantin-Latour, and a painting by George Frederic Watts are over Lady Caroline's desk; a quilt done by her hand is on the table. *Below:* An informal sitting room known as The Men's Room is in green and rose with pictures from a book illustrated by Claude Lorrain.


10 WINE STREET.
BRISTOL.



Pat Montandon in her living room beneath a favorite tapestry. *Opposite:* An 11th-century Roman well top found in France, now displayed on end on a cast-stone pedestal designed by Michael Taylor.

VILLA IN THE SKY

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RUSSELL MACMASTERS

Working on a grand scale, San Francisco interior designer Michael Taylor gives free rein to his imagination in a spacious penthouse, turning mirror, marble, cast stone, and a mix of antiques into an ultra-sophisticated backdrop for a modern city life







"All these years, I'd been trying to anchor this apartment with earth colors, since we're so high up," says writer Pat Montandon of her striking penthouse on Russian Hill in San Francisco, where she lives with her 12-year-old son. "And now it seems so obvious that a lighter look is what's natural when you're living in the clouds." Tired of her carpeted floors, somber colors, and velvet sofas, Ms. Montandon spoke to designer Michael Taylor about making a big change. "I've always loved having people around," says Montandon, "and the decorating I'd done in 1967 wasn't working for the kind of easy, open entertaining I had grown to enjoy. I was yearning for a place that was warm, sunny, and simple—a place to roam through without a lot of doors and distractions."

Taylor began the transformation of Montandon's large apartment by taking down the walls between all the first-floor rooms, then enclosing an atrium to make one generous interior that plays up the 25-foot ceilings. Says Montandon, "Tearing down the walls was the scariest part. I was enthusiastic, but there was still a part of me wondering if it was going to look like a bowling alley or a skating rink." It turned out that there was no reason for reservations. "Michael's done five houses for me," says Montandon, "and each time—even when I've worried—I've ended up with exactly the look I'd envisioned." In fact, far from being cold, the apartment, says Montandon, is warmer and more welcoming than before. "One morning I came downstairs," she explains, "and the chairs at the foot of the stairs were glowing with light; then I looked outside and it was foggy!"

The light that comes into Pat Montandon's penthouse, in Michael Taylor's view, is "like no light anywhere else in the *(Continued on page 70)*

Left: Where the atrium used to be, oversized cast-stone chairs now sit, each one 5½ feet wide so two can curl up comfortably. *Overleaf:* The Belgian tapestry is the only thing that wasn't moved in the redecoration. On the travertine table, pre-Columbian clay shells, a Majorcan stone bowl, a geode. All stone furniture designed by Michael Taylor.







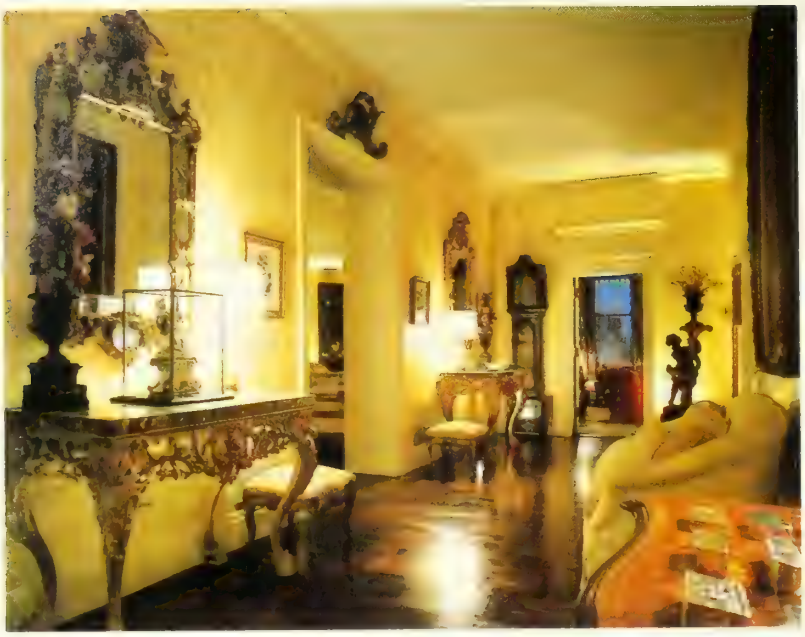
Right: The oak staircase, stripped of black paint and bleached, now seems to float in air. Régence chairs flank a Louis XVI Chinoiserie tray table. *Above:* A French sandstone mantel frames the newly enlarged fireplace. On the mantel, a Roman bust.

world." And his decorating priority was to capitalize on it. He geared his materials to the constant sun, as if he were entrusted with a Riviera villa: basketweave cotton slipcovers are soft beige, as are the walls—"I never use pure white," says Taylor—and the travertine floors are a warming subtle pink. Much of the furniture is cast stone (which certainly won't fade) and 25-foot ficus trees thrive. At night, sights glisten in the distance—the Golden Gate Bridge, the Alcatraz lighthouse, the Transamerica pyramid—and mirrored walls opposite the windows afford a wraparound view.

The mix of Régence, rattan, and stone is as eclectic as the guests who gather at Montandon's monthly "round table" luncheons and dinners. The round tables are known for their diversity: a recent one included Alex Haley, Hermione Gingold, Joan Baez, and Eldridge Cleaver, among others.

At present, Montandon is devoting herself to the "Children as Teachers of Peace" project, which was kicked off by her dinner honoring Jehan Sadat, where a chorus of 48 children lined up on the staircase to sing to the guests. During the Christmas holidays, Montandon traveled to Washington, D.C., and the U.S.S.R. to deliver letters of peace written by children to President Reagan and General Secretary Andropov. □ *By Mary Seehafer*





Right: The piano is a successor to the upright where Oscar Hammerstein polished his lyrics. *Above:* In the foyer, marbelized walls and 18th-century English mirrors and consoles furnish a formal welcome.

DOROTHY HAMMERSTEIN

DECORATING HER WAY

Although Dorothy Hammerstein moved to this cooperative apartment just a decade ago, it reflects a lifelong dedication to decoration: "As a girl I read Elsie de Wolfe's book *The House in Good Taste*," she says, "and that became my bible." True to her passion, Mrs. Hammerstein was a decorator from the '30s to the '50s. In recent years she has called upon a friend, interior designer David E. Briggs, for suggestions and help with her interiors, here and previously in the town house she had shared with her late husband, the Broadway lyricist Oscar Hammerstein.

Mrs. Hammerstein has gathered ideas, inspiration, and furnishings from the countries where she has lived—Australia, Jamaica, and England as well as America. She calls her living room the drawing room, and, true to the origin of the term, it is where guests withdraw for demitasse after dinner. Unlike 19th-century drawing rooms, however, Mrs. Hammerstein's receives guests of both sexes, and the grandeur of antiques—Chinese lacquer screens, a painted Venetian secretary—is balanced with 20th-century warmth: lemon-colored walls, a *(Continued on page 76)*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER VITALE







Above: Dorothy B. Hammerstein.
Left: In the lemon-tinted drawing room, English portraits of a perennial subject—boys with their pets. Who they are and who painted them remain mysteries, but Mrs. Hammerstein finds them perfect companions for the screens at the opposite end of the room (shown on next page).
On an 18th-century Chinese lacquer table, emu eggs from Mrs. Hammerstein's native Australia nestle among family photographs. The chandelier in the dining room is an Irish antique.



durrie rug, family photographs, and seating with comfortable curves—rollback chairs, broad bergères, a low Victorian chauffeuse.

There is more at work in these rooms than a marvelous eye and praise for proportion. They have the character and soul that comes when a discerning owner acquires, in this case over decades, what appeals to her particular taste. An instinctive buyer, Mrs. Hammerstein waits patiently until the right piece crosses her path and knows it's right as soon as she sees it. A pair of white Derby figurines caught her eye, so she had table lamps (now in the foyer) made to display them. Tabletops are domains of delight, with clusters of seashells or small silver boxes. Everywhere there are fresh or fanciful *faux* flowers: antique painted tin ones in the foyer, an explosion of silk blooms in the bedroom. Credit, too, is due interior designer Kevin McNamara, for the glorious silk curtains in the dining room and bedroom and the Indian durrie in the dining room, all obtained for the apartment's previous owner.

Elsie de Wolfe would be pleased, for the scheme doesn't stop with beautiful things—it extends to the life that is lived with them. Mrs. Hammerstein takes breakfast in bed and in the evening likes to read on the chaise longue. When she entertains, she prefers small dinner parties for eight or ten. The food is light and in the British order of service, a wonderful salad and cheese between the main course and dessert. The atmosphere glows with crystal, candlelight, and conversation. If she has one misgiving about her gatherings, it is only that guests sit down and play the piano "not nearly often enough." □ *By Margaret Morse*



Opposite: Patterns from nature embellish the drawing room's Chinese lacquer screens, Venetian secretary, and Brunschwig chintz. *Above:* In the dining room, Baroque festoons carved by Grinling Gibbons surround an ancestral portrait. Bow-tied slipcovers lend a piquant touch to Regency chairs—and save their fragile wood from yet another round of upholstery tacks. More Chinoiserie: the Chippendale mirror and tobacco-leaf Export porcelain. *Right:* Mrs. Hammerstein's bedroom has a full measure of mementos from family and friends. David Briggs chose neat-as-a-bandbox wallpaper and designed the canopy—reverse moiré lined with Canovas cotton. Mrs. Hammerstein devised the custom tablecover with pleated flounces. An upholstered screen hides the television from view.



Right: Melozzo da Forlì's 1479 *Angel.* *Below:* Bernini's bronze baldachin in St. Peter's. *Overleaf:* A room fit for kings, the Sala Regia was originally designed to receive royalty.



Since the Renaissance the Popes have been great patrons and collectors of art and architecture. Now more than 200 works from the historic Vatican Collections can be seen in one of the year's most important art exhibitions.

BY HOWARD HIBBARD

Art & the Popes

The history of museums and collecting goes back to antiquity, but the first public collection of sculpture was established by a Pope: in 1471 Sixtus IV made a gift of antique sculpture to the Roman people, which eventually grew into the Capitoline Museums. Perhaps no Pope was a greater patron than the nephew of Sixtus IV, Julius II (1503–1513), who hired Michelangelo, Raphael, and Bramante to decorate and rebuild St. Peter's.

Julius first commissioned Michelangelo to carve his tomb for St. Peter's; then, because of the dilapidated state of the ancient basilica, he decided to build an even greater monument, a new St. Peter's on an antique scale. After the cornerstone was laid in 1506 it took well over a century to build the huge church; and funding for the project indirectly helped spark Luther's revolt in the 1520s. Michelangelo was persuaded to paint the Sistine ceiling and Raphael to fresco rooms of the Vatican that became the paradigm of classic art. Bramante also began a vast structure, the Belvedere, that connects the Vatican with an older villa *(Continued on page 83)*









to the north; once it was underway, Julius moved some of his treasures, including the *Apollo,* into niches there—hence the names *Apollo Belvedere* and *Torso Belvedere* attached to two of the best-known antiquities in the exhibition.

The *Apollo Belvedere* seems to have belonged to Julius II even before he was elected Pope, so it is his personal contribution to the exhibition. J. J. Winckelmann thought it had been brought from Greece by Nero; today we see it as something less magical, a broken and—truth to say—rather ineloquent Roman copy in marble of what may once have been a good Greek bronze of the 4th century B.C. Nor did the statue make much impression on Michelangelo, but there is no denying its hold on later generations. In the 18th century, a favored time to see the *Apollo Belvedere* was at night by the light of wax torches, so that the eye was not distracted by other works and accidents of placement were overcome by artificial light. Bernini paraphrased it in his *Apollo and Daphne,* Rubens took it as a model, and Sir Joshua Reynolds used the pose in a famous portrait; by then the statue was commonly regarded as the greatest in the world, and was known everywhere from casts, drawings, and engravings. When Goethe first went to Rome in 1786 he wrote that the *Apollo Belvedere* "swept me off my feet," although it reminded the American painter Benjamin West of nothing so much as a young Mohawk warrior.

We may be more fascinated by the wreck of the *Torso Belvedere,* which Michelangelo supposedly admired for hours, saying of the sculptor, "this man knew more than nature." Michelangelo lived until 1564, into the Counter Reformation era, working all his life for a succession of Popes. Paul III (1534–49) was the most important, for he not only got Michelangelo to do more paintings but also persuaded him to take over the troubled works of St. Peter's in 1546. Michelangelo completely redesigned the great building on the outside, and even as completed it is essentially Michelangelo's monument. Another of Paul III's commissions was the sumptuous Sala Regia for papal audiences, near the Sistine Chapel but rarely seen by visitors. It has elaborate stucco decorations by followers of Raphael and Michelangelo, and elaborate paintings celebrating papal triumphs.

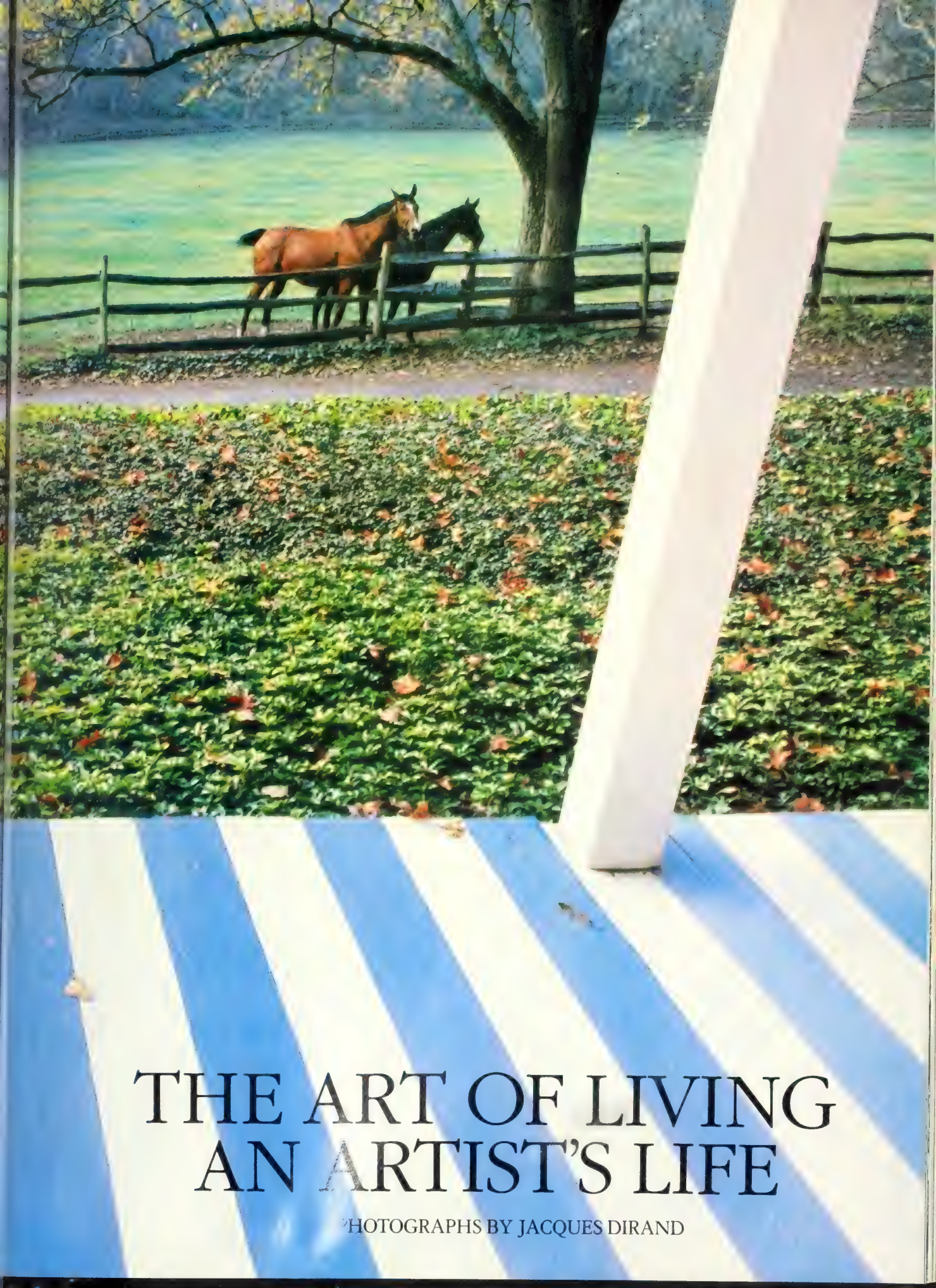
Raphael, whose frescoes are one of the Vatican's chief glories, is represented by one of his tapestries designed for the Sistine Chapel. *The Miraculous Draught of Fishes* is a miracle of design and a brilliant example of the weaver's art, with silver and gold threads. The series of 10 depicts outstanding events in the lives of saints Peter and Paul; this one originally hung to the right of the high altar in the Sistine Chapel, a point of honor. It is one of the great works of art of all time. *(Continued on page 164)*



Left: Apollo Belvedere was Julius II's gift to the Sculpture Garden he commissioned. *Above: The Torso Belvedere* is thought to date from the first century B.C.

The Vatican Collections: The Papacy and Art opens February 26 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, underwritten by a grant from Philip Morris Inc., before traveling to the Art Institute of Chicago and the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.





THE ART OF LIVING AN ARTIST'S LIFE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JACQUES DIRAND

Preceding pages: The front porch, though it overlooks lovely pastures and woods, was in itself a little dull to its artist owner, so she devised the blue-and-white deck-paint striping as a sky-bright introduction to the house. *Below:* Janet Ruttenberg outside her barn studio, where she has been working on a seven-plate print of eggs. *Opposite:* A glimpse of the master bedroom with its homespun duvets.



If you want to know about a woman, ask her decorator, the person who learns her strengths, weaknesses, dreams, and fears. Decorator Mark Hampton has worked with his friend Janet Ruttenberg on her New York apartment off and on for 15 years and has found her "an extraordinary client. She is intensely interested in her visual life. Ugliness in her surroundings bothers her acutely, and she will persistently work until it is gone and she can stop thinking about it. Theoretical style doesn't matter to her; objects do. Each thing in her rooms can be identified as belonging to Janet whether it is a priceless work of art or a common American quilt, a simple milk pitcher or a museum-quality Louis XVI console. And she will have no compunction about putting that pitcher right on that console if it looks good to her."

Decorating is just one of the things Janet Ruttenberg does—in four houses and three countries. This small, beautiful woman in her quiet Chanel suit is a juggler of many roles: daughter, wife, and mother of four, artist, art collector, and museum print department consultant, and hostess with her corporate executive husband, Derald, in the scattered houses in which she lives her visual life.

After the people close to her, Janet Ruttenberg cares most about art. She has been an artist since she could hold a crayon and treasures early memories of winter evenings in her hometown of Dubuque, Iowa, when she and her father would sit by the hour sketching each other. Mrs. Ruttenberg has done a good deal of painting, much of it portraiture (her children used to tell her, "you had us just to get models"). She has created—one might say engineered—some massive works in etched stainless steel, and now she concentrates on printmaking. As an etcher, Janet Ruttenberg goes beyond the aesthetic to plumb the technique. With Donn Steward, the master printer who taught his craft to Motherwell and Rauschenberg, she has been analyzing and experimenting with color printing methods developed by Mary Cassatt, an artist she admires greatly. Several museums, including the Brooklyn and the Philadelphia, own Ruttenberg prints.

Janet and Derald Ruttenberg's breathtaking print collection is further evidence of her expertise. Patiently searching the art market has won her such works as Goya's 33-print *Tauromaquia*; Rembrandt's *The Three Crosses* in the fourth state; Dürer's *Melencolia I*; Rembrandt's *Flight into Egypt*, his famous reworking of a Seghers plate; and a woodcut cycle by Utamaro. More recent artists in the collection include Ingres, Mauricio Lasansky (Mrs. Ruttenberg's teacher), Matisse, and Picasso.

The ways she has decorated the Bucks County farmhouse and New York apartment shown on these pages reflect Janet Ruttenberg's absorption in etching. She speaks of the positive and negative, the no-color lights and darks that have pleased her most in art and in rooms. *(Continued on page 93)*

In a pre-Revolutionary Bucks County farmhouse and a 1930s New York apartment, artist Janet Ruttenberg plays city and country variations on a few consistent themes: beautiful objects placed with ample space and light; the rich blended with the plain; wood and white intensified with quiet color











Preceding pages: In the front room, a wall of time-darkened 18th-century paneling, whitewashed cupboards made by the Ruttenbergs of old barn lumber, white covers, and pewter plates make a monochrome to suit an etcher. *Opposite:* Outdoor seating areas like this one near the house dot the Ruttenberg farm. Owners and guests also swim, play tennis, ride, shoot. *This page:* Between adjoining front doors typical of pre-Revolutionary Dutch houses, extra chairs hang Shaker style, on pegs.





"I love Dubuque—Paris and Dubuque," Janet Ruttenberg says with her characteristic combination of humor and seriousness. The stone houses of Dubuque and Galena, Illinois, an important part of her early visual life, made the Bucks County stone farmhouse seem familiar to her when the couple first saw it 16 years ago. "I knew how comfortable I would feel living in it, and how easily I could decorate it. I wouldn't need any professional advice in this place."

Part of Janet Ruttenberg's Midwestern heritage is a love for handcrafts, especially sewing and textiles. In her country house this love is expressed in many ways: the stairs have rag-rug runners, and individual small braided rugs are scattered in a sitting room, under each table and chair, instead of the usual single large oval. A sofa is covered in fabric made of large-check dishtowels sewn together. And old quilts cover most of the beds.

In the city, Janet Ruttenberg makes table-setting another visual problem to be solved, and dinner guests have learned to expect surprises. Mark Hampton remembers one of her recent table designs: a staggered line of etched bottles and vases (old, new, a collection built over many years) holding one white freesia each, and at every place setting an etched glass decanter of white wine—all upon a white lace cloth given Mrs. Ruttenberg by her lace-collecting mother.

The dinner table in the farmhouse might be set with Gaudy Dutch china, homespun mats, and a leafless branch bearing dried berries. Friends know Janet *(Continued on page 163)*

The dining room's oddly slanted dresser was found in one of the barns on the farm and welcomed into the house. Every piece of china has its story, its own appeal; even an abandoned wasp's nest is decoration.



This page: The Ruttenberg apartment is so near the river that one's first impression in the drawing room is of whiteness with green water reflections. Actually the walls and ceiling are painted a subtle, pale aquamarine that changes in every light. Over the Louis XVI console, a Picasso print. *Opposite:* In a corner of the drawing room, Utamaro's 18th-century wood-block cycle *Gift from the Sea* flanks Munakata's 20th-century *Eulogy to Flower Hunting*.



GROTTOS

CAVES OF MYSTERY AND MAGIC

BY SUSAN SONTAG

Garden history is an endlessly enthralling branch of art history, opening onto the history of outdoor spectacles (the masque, fireworks, pageants), of architecture, of urban planning—and of literary history as well. Once mainly a European subject (its scholars were French, English, German), it now flourishes in this country, too. One center of activity is the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library in Washington, D.C., which possesses superb materials on garden history.

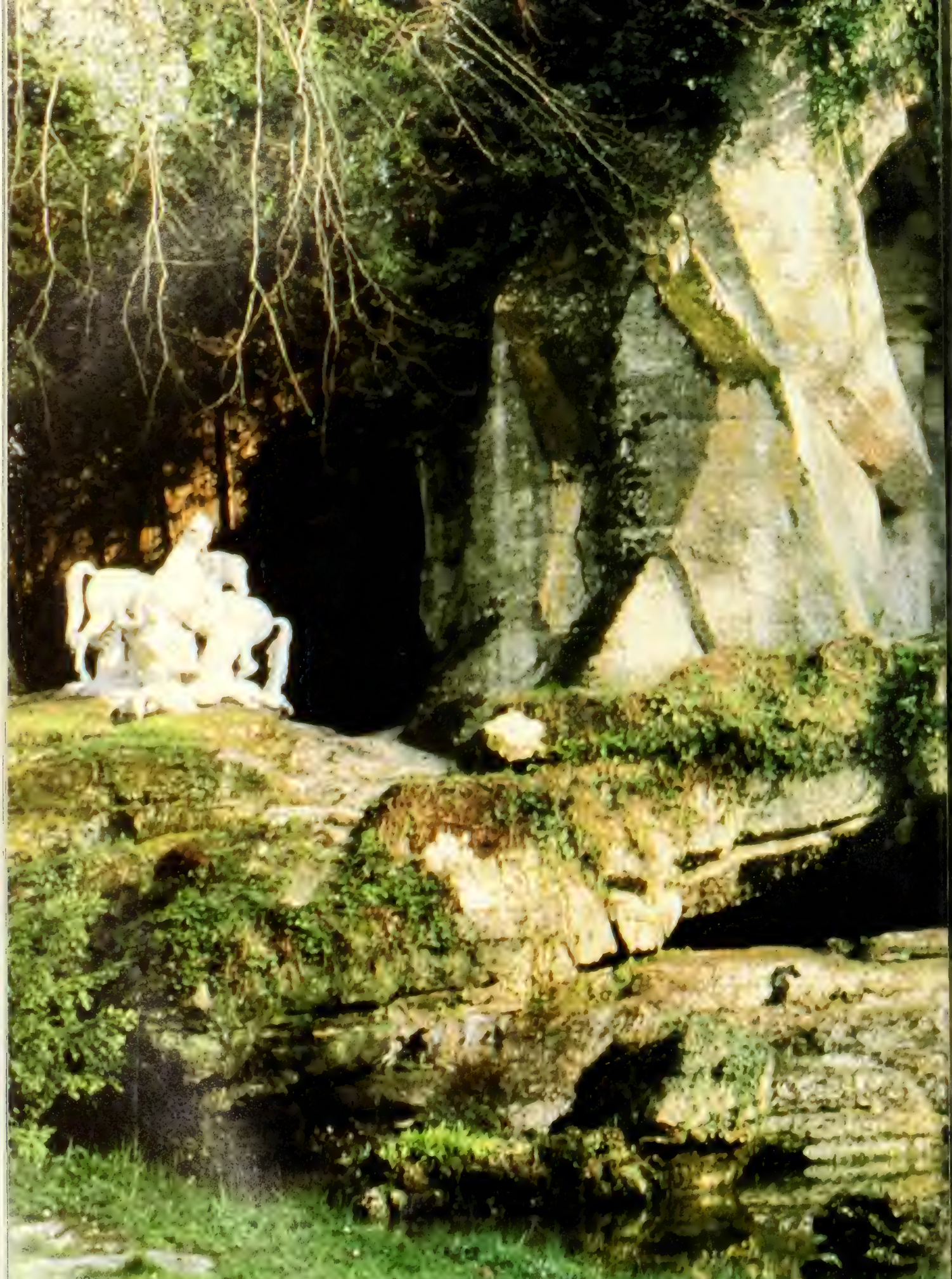
The principal tradition of Western garden art is inclusive rather than exclusionary, putting human-made constructions—of marble, brick, tufa, stucco, wood—among the trees and plants. And of the many constructions that recur in gardens (statuary, fountains, follies, bridges) none is more fascinating or complex in its history and associations than the grotto. It is a space that is, literally, profound. The human-made recess or subterranean space that is called a grotto is, usually, a space already tamed. Other, less reassuring names for the same kind of space are cave, underground vault, crypt. Grottos in gardens are the domesticated version of a space that is often scary, even repulsive, and yet exercises on some people, of whom I am one, a very strong attraction. I have always been fascinated by grottos and have gone out of my way to look at them and at constructions that echo them. This curiosity is perhaps no more than dread mastered—but then the grotto seems no more, or less, than a playfulness with morbid feelings.

For grottos to enter the garden, a place conceived as a haven and a site of recreation, their original functions had to be secularized or miniaturized. Grottos, mostly real grottos, were first of all sacred places. The sybil or oracle's lair, the hermit's retreat, the sect's sanctuary, the resting-place of the bones of holy men and revered ancestors—we are never far, in our imaginations, from being reminded of the cell and the grave. And grottos that were artificial had, to begin with, severely practical purposes: like the marvelous vaults the Romans built as part of hydraulic projects. Artificial caves first appear as an element in the garden program in the late Roman Republic. From the latter part of the first century B.C. artificial grottos, and rooms fitted out to resemble grottos, became common features of the gardens of the villas of wealthy Roman patricians. These artificial caverns, ornamented space that alluded gracefully to the old, sacred spaces and their mysteries, were partly practical constructions for pleasures and entertainments conducted outdoors—for example, as the backdrop of satyric plays and for banquets. Perhaps the most famous and grandiose, though hardly typical, of the villas whose ruins survive from the ancient world was Hadrian's Villa in Tivoli near Rome, which had a number of artificial grottos.

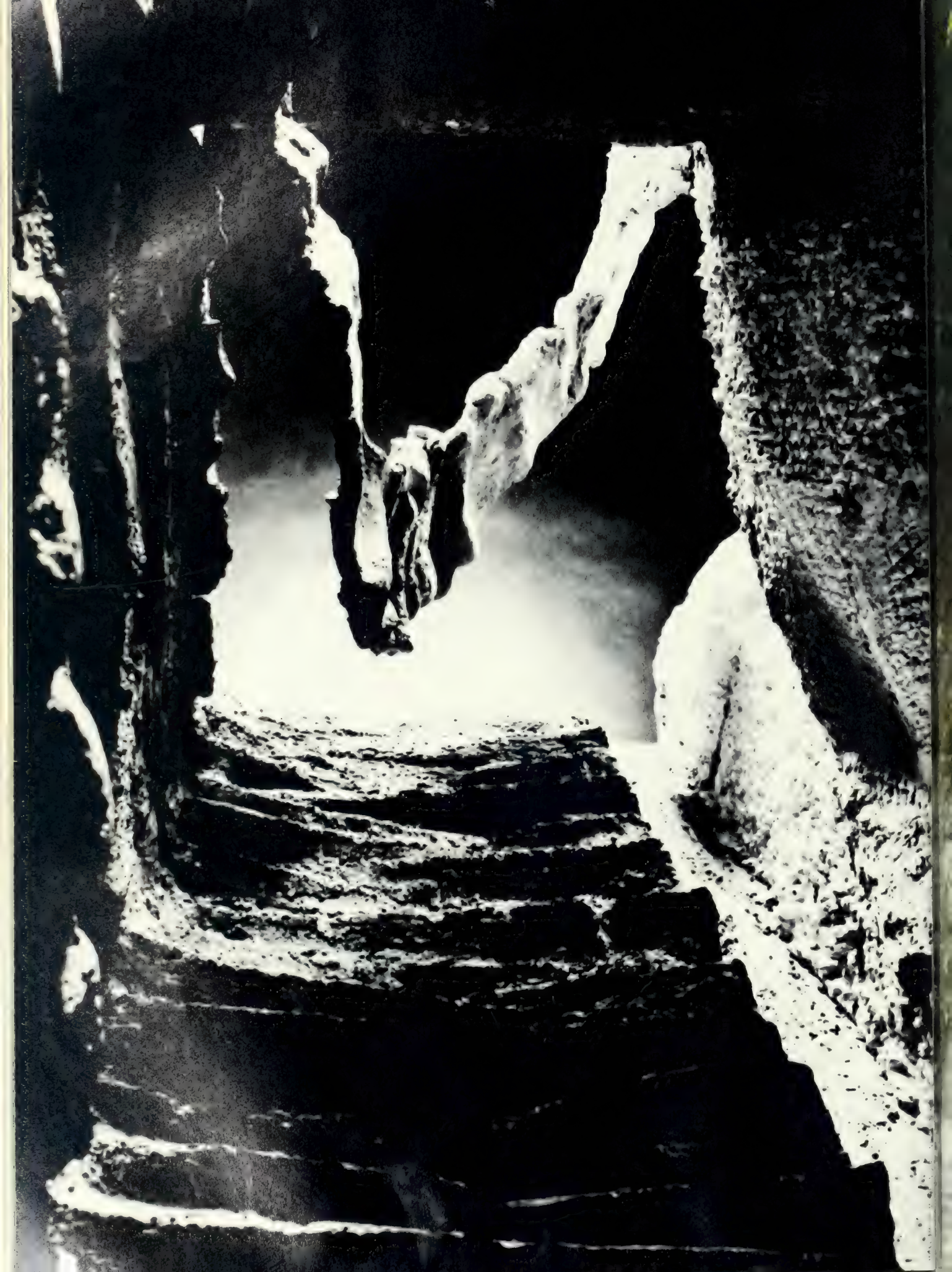
Christianity gave the grotto new associations and succeeded in monopolizing grotto imagery for more than a thousand years. Supposedly natural, but in fact thoroughly stylized, grottos figure in paintings of the Christian narratives—the cave of the Nativity, the sepulcher of the Entombment—and in the lives of saints like Jerome and Anthony, who are often depicted as praying or being assailed at the mouth of their hermit's grotto. The revival of the garden grotto—that is, the reconnecting of the grotto with the garden—had to wait for the Renaissance, when the grotto could be divested of its principally Christian associations and infused with new, eclectic symbolism (Neo-Platonist, humanist). Although the gardens and grottos of the classical villas had long since been leveled, descriptions of them—for example, by Ovid *(Continued on page 102)*

Right Gate of Hell in the gardens of Bomarzo, north of Rome, created from 1550–1570 for Vicino Orsini. *Preceding pages:* Versailles, The Bath of Apollo, 1778–1881, by Hubert Robert.











pposite: Interior view of the stairway
the model of The Endless House,
unexecuted project by Frederick Kiesler
hibited at the Museum of Modern Art,
59–60. *This page:* In Parque Güell
900–14), Antoni Gaudí used
wrought stone to create grotto-like arcades.



and Livy—had been preserved, and were admired. The elaboration of the garden grotto, a principal feature of the new heights attained by the garden in the Renaissance, produced such triumphs as the Grotta Grande in the Medicis' Boboli Gardens in Florence and the many grottos and hydraulic marvels of Pratolino, so admired by Montaigne and other foreign visitors. The use of the grottos of ancient villas as banquet sites protected from the sun was replaced in the Renaissance with their function as backdrops for theatrical spectacles.

The distinctive, complex idea of the garden as a work of art, which has been most prevalent in Western culture—the garden as an "ideal" landscape, including an anthology of architectural elements, and featuring water-works of various spectacular contrivance—is defined in the Renaissance. Though only one element of the garden program, which in the West has mostly been heterogenous, the grotto has a privileged place: it is an intensification, in miniature, of the whole garden-world. It is also the garden's inversion. The essence of the garden is that it is outdoors, open, light, spacious, natural, while the grotto is the quintessence of what is indoors, hidden, dim, artificial, decorated. The grotto is, characteristically, a space that is adorned—with frescoes, painted stuccoes, mosaics, or (the association with water remaining paramount) shells.

In the garden history that starts in the Renaissance, the grotto reflected all the turns of taste, all the ideas of the theater. The grotto as artificial ruin. The grotto as a place for foolery and escapades. (A modern, degraded form of this survives in the fairground's papier-maché Tunnel of Love.) The grotto as showcase. The grotto is, as it were, the innately decadent element of the garden ensemble; the one that is most impure, and most ambiguous. It is a space that is complex and accumulative—dimly lit—thickly ornamented. (An appeal to fantasy, and a likely site for the elaboration of bad taste.) At first it was thought to be the most intensively "rustic" space—the imitation of a cave (as in some Roman villas). Increasingly, in grotto history, it was an elaborately theatrical, encrusted space. The roof and walls of the famous grotto built by Alexander Pope at Twickenham in the 1720s and 1730s were studded with shards of mirror interspersed with shells. (The grotto as *camera obscura,* in Pope's phrase.) In the 18th century, many grottos were built by shell collectors principally as a setting to display their treasures. One of the last private grottos, the "Venus Grotto" built by Ludwig II of Bavaria at Linderhof in 1876–77, was itself a theatrical space, the setting of several scenes from Wagner's *Tannhäuser.* "Le Palais Idéal du Facteur Cheval," in a small village in central France, could be regarded as the great garden grotto of the beginning of this century—and perhaps the last of the breed. The crypt-like ground level of this astonishing building has the characteristic encrustedness of the grotto interior, the didacticism, and the reach for the sublime. Its builder's aim is nothing less than to miniaturize, and thereby to possess, the sublime. There are inscriptions, labels, declarations, adages incised throughout on the walls—the whole structure being designed, with something like genius, by the inspired autodidactic village postman who built it single-handedly between 1879 and 1912, as an anthology of world spiritual wisdom. However different in materials and sensibility, Ferdinand Cheval's didactic grotto-labyrinth belongs to the same family as the didactic grotto of Pope. *(Continued on page 156)*



Above: A view of the Moscow subway built in the early 30s. *Right:* The interior of Eero Saarinen's TWA terminal at Kennedy Airport, 1956–62.

Right: A grotto in the Boboli Gardens, laid out between 1583–93 according to the plans of Bernardo Buontalenti; the gardens were completed under Duke Francesco I de'Medici.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER VITALE

POLISHED AND PRETTY

Mario Buatta transforms a Florida apartment

For Nancy and Frank S. Benson Jr.'s wintertime apartment in Delray Beach, Florida, interior designer Mario Buatta decided that just plain pretty would be preferable to beach-house casual. "I wanted the rooms to capture the feeling of a Prendergast or a Boudin," he says. "In this hot climate, I thought every room should look especially light and cool."

Maurice Prendergast and Eugène Boudin, of course, worked in watercolors and oils for their paintings of seaside scenes and of people in parks. For his beachfront-apartment setting, Mario Buatta used an expert combination of light and dark colors, rich and smooth textures, and traditional and contemporary furnishings.

But first, Buatta had to solve a few architectural problems. "The apartment is in a Y-shaped building," he notes, "and that meant a few dark, oddly shaped spaces, a few strangely



"I was concerned when Mario first suggested that green for the walls," Nancy Benson admits about the library, "but it's exactly as he convinced us it would be—absolutely smashing." The Bensons often entertain throughout the apartment, serving drinks in the library. "Other evenings we're in there for cards or TV." The D'Aguilar painting came from the Bensons' Ohio home.



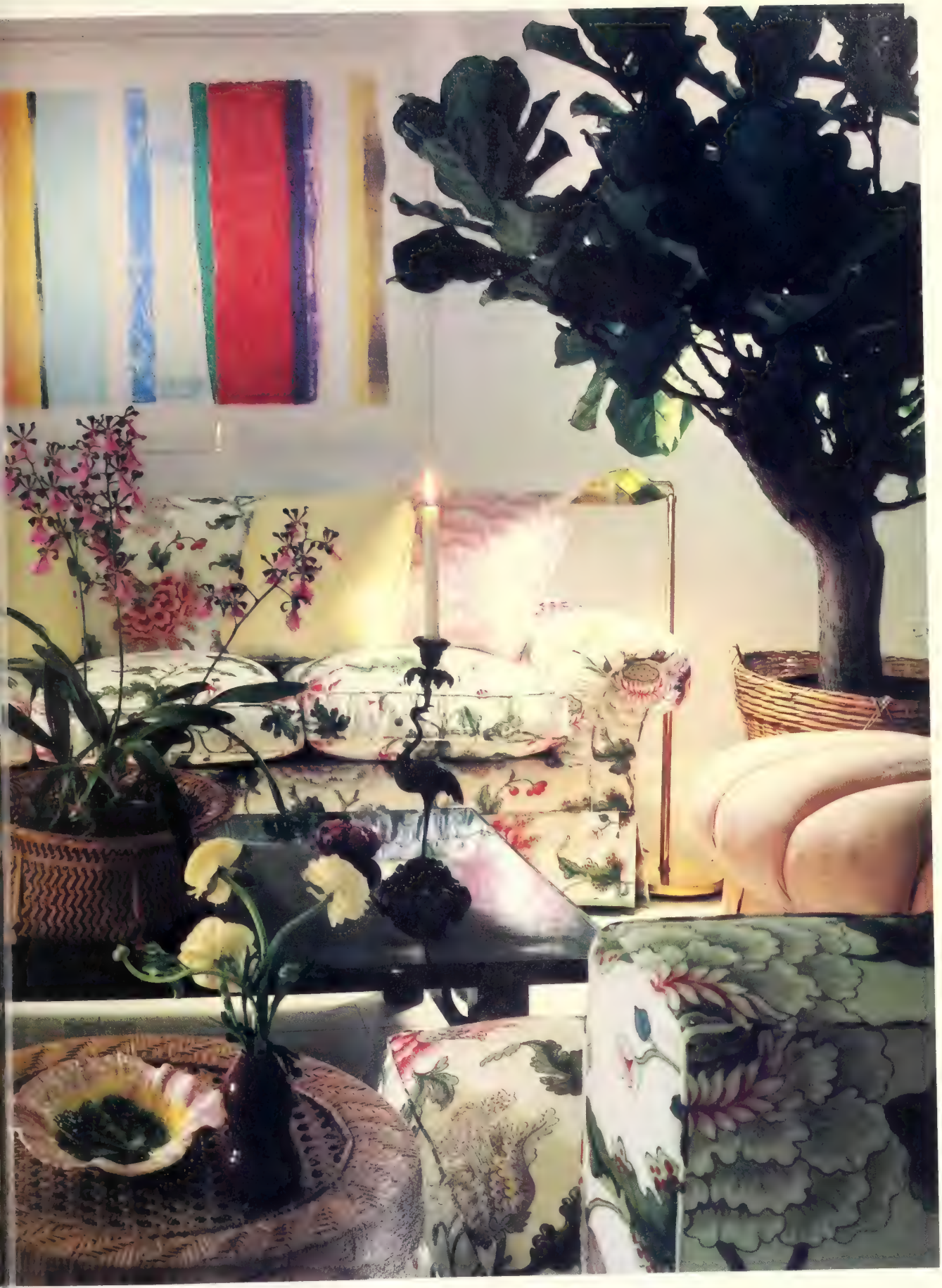
angled walls. And terrace overhangs cut off a great deal of light." Buatta added glass walls to enclose terrace space at the beach end of both the library and the living room; then he gave adjoining interior walls a high gloss to catch and reflect the natural light. In the Bensons' living room he used a mirrored wall and mirrored folding screen to make the quirkiness of the architecture less obvious.

In every room a flow of pale neutrals on the floor helps unify formerly dark original interior areas and the new, bright glassed-in ones. In the library and bedrooms carpeting does the





Right: In the iced-lavender living room, chintz is joined by a shell-shaped silk ottoman designed by Mario Buatta and a white-on-white-linen armchair. Painting above sofa by Robert Natkin. On the lacquered coffee table is a pair of early-19th-century ibis candelabra. *Above:* Walls in adjoining sunroom are bleached cypress. Birdcage is a French antique. Glass doors lead to a huge terrace.







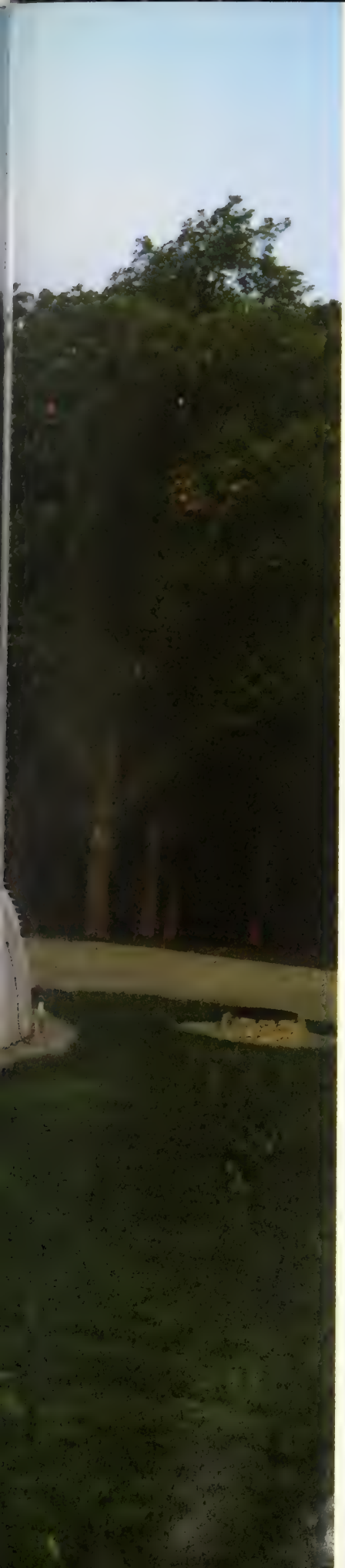


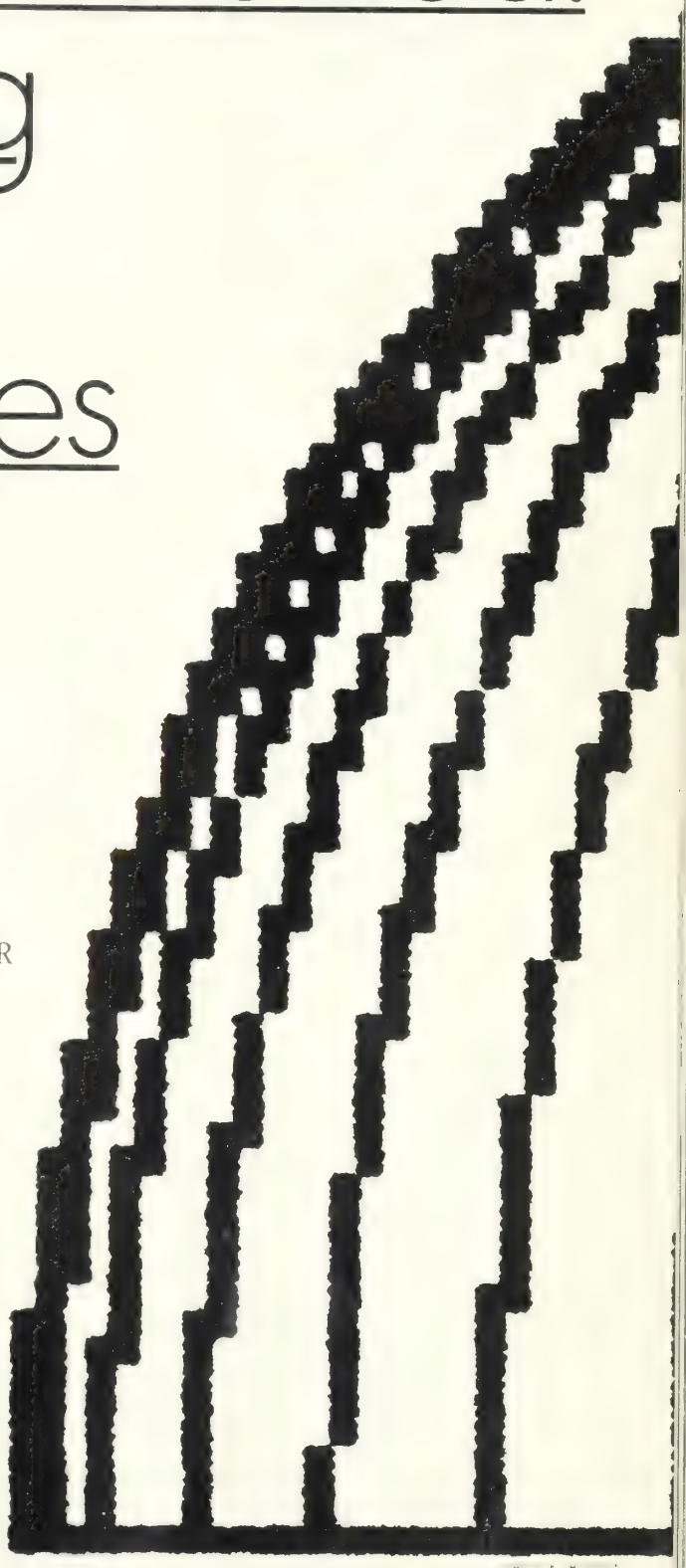
trick; in the living room a *faux marbre* design is painted over the original wood. And in each main room the decorating begins with a chintz—"a big print with all kinds of wonderful colors"—to generate a cheerful scheme. "Soft blues, pinks, violet, yellow—they're my favorite colors," says Nancy Benson. "We have them in our Columbus house, too." Buatta also designed those interiors, as well as the Bensons' vacation house on Buckeye Lake in Ohio. Capping off the Bensons' Florida interiors are a few special paintings from their extensive art collection, including two favorite oils by Annie Bonney, formerly of Columbus. □

Left: The Bensons' romantic master bedroom has strié-painted "peachy pink" walls, crisp Porthault linens, a bleached antique French armoire. Guests and grandchildren stay in a blue bedroom with delicate polka-dot walls (not shown). *Above:* One end of the sunroom serves the Bensons as a dining room. Dining table has gilded-bamboo base and is surrounded by antique Venetian chairs.



Domes Domesticated: Living in Circles





PHOTOGRAPHS BY
TIM STREET-PORTER

Left: It looks more like an Arctic apparition or an extraterrestrial spacecraft set down in an Illinois clearing, but this is actually a house designer Michael Jantzen developed as a prototype for possible mass production. The Jantzen house (now owned by the designer's parents) is an assemblage of prefabricated steel silo domes, combining the ready-made materials of High Tech architecture with state-of-the-art design methods. *Right:* Segment of a computer-generated graphic of the dome house.

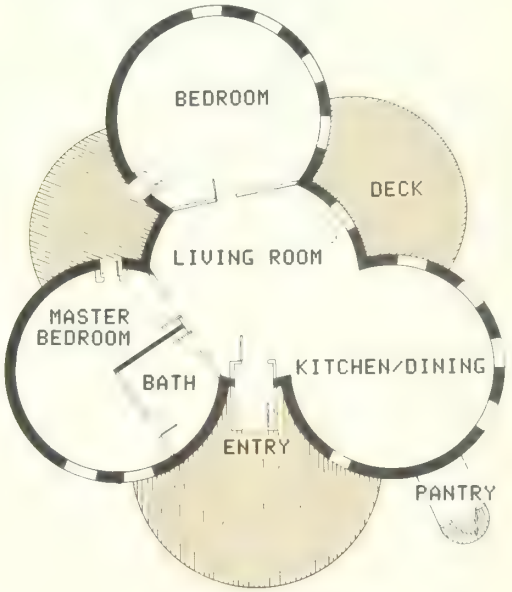






Since ancient times the dome has symbolized mankind's desire to triumph over gravity. Although it would be millenia before man could fly, the dome allowed interior space and the human spirit to soar. The romance of the dome did not die with the birth of modern architecture; new building materials and technologies stimulated innovative adaptations of that venerable form. The most famous in this century, of course, are the geodesic domes of Buckminster Fuller. During the late 1960s, Fuller's engineering principles were combined with the found-object philosophy of the counter-culture in Drop City, a hippie commune in Colorado that built geodesic domes from discarded automobile bodies.

Now a further development has taken place as Michael Jantzen, a young Illinois designer, has devised a new kind of dome construction that combines the technological precision of Fuller with the imaginative recycling sense of Drop City.



Left: Living room looking toward kitchen and dining area. Low seating accentuates ceiling height; instead of a High Tech look, Jantzen chose a soft contemporary approach that is simple but not Spartan. *Top:* Entry side of the Jantzen house. *Above:* Plan showing how three "wings" interpenetrate the central living-room dome.













Top left: Michael Jantzen designed all the furniture for the house, including this movable, demountable bunk bed. *Top right:* Another Jantzen design is built-in desk with adjustable top. Computerized television monitor at right shows graphic image seen in detail on graph111. *Center left:* Storage unit attached to the kitchen/dining dome is made from exterior silo components called chute sections. *Center right:* Wood storage shed. Though winter temperatures in Carlyle can reach 18° below zero, the house can generally be heated for the entire season with just one cord of wood. *Bottom left:* Bathroom lights use warm-white fluorescent rings. *Bottom right:* Double-door entry lock also conserves heat. *Right:* Freestanding storage dome is 16 feet in diameter, one-third smaller than those of house. Removal of storage from main house to unheated shed was another energy-saving strategy. Computer by Apple. Silo components by Railoc Co. Insulation by National Cellulose Corp. Special plywood (for furniture) by Simpson Timber Co.

Called a "super-insulated dome cluster" by its designer and builder, this unusual structure looks more like an Eskimo condo than a house one would expect to find in Carlyle, a small rural community in southern Illinois some 40 miles east of St. Louis. One major problem with buildings that depart from the rectilinear convention is their much smaller proportion of usable space than that of conventional orthogonal structures. This is particularly true in round buildings, for they are missing the corners that would be present in a comparably sized rectilinear floor plan; the prime functional area in a round space tends to be within the square that can be inscribed inside the circle. The problem is compounded in a dome house by the ceiling height, which diminishes precipitously toward the perimeter.

To counterbalance that shortcoming, Jantzen ganged four silo domes of prepainted galvanized steel to create interpenetrating spaces that together make a virtue of what would have been a flaw in a single larger dome with the same total floor space. The open areas that result are unusually spacious for a prefabricated house of any configuration. To make the house more energy-conserving, interior domes 24 feet across were placed inside the 26-foot-wide outer shells and the gap between them filled with insulation.

The porthole windows, most of which face south, were gasket-sealed, and an airlock entry door, similar to those in inflatable structures, was used to reduce heat loss. The interior walls of the house were sprayed with cellulose insulation to reduce echoes and painted an off-white throughout. Jantzen had George Lager of the University of Louisville develop a temperature-monitoring program for the computer installed in the house during its first season to see if energy-conserving modifications should be considered. Furnishings were kept intentionally low and simple, and the lack of conventional wall art is to some extent made up for by the sculptural feeling of the spaces. Not everyone's idea of home by any means, the Jantzen house nevertheless opens thinking as it opens eyes. □

By Martin Filler









Left: Fall-front desk by Riesener at Maurice Segoura, one of the major pieces at the exhibition.



Left: Jean-Marie Rossi with 18th-century Ch'ien-lung fish bowl, 19th-century giltwood base. Russian chandelier. *Above:* 19th-century watercolorist's chair at Armand & Serge Khaitrine. Easel slides along chairback.



Right: Important Art Deco furniture at Jean-Jacques Dutko. Wall lamp by Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann; tall ceramic vase by Cazaux; blue pâte de verre bowl by François Decorchement; painting by Jean Crotti; ebony marquetry buffet by Eugène Printz.



WHERE CHOICE IS CHOICE

BY NANCY RICHARDSON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB PEDERSEN

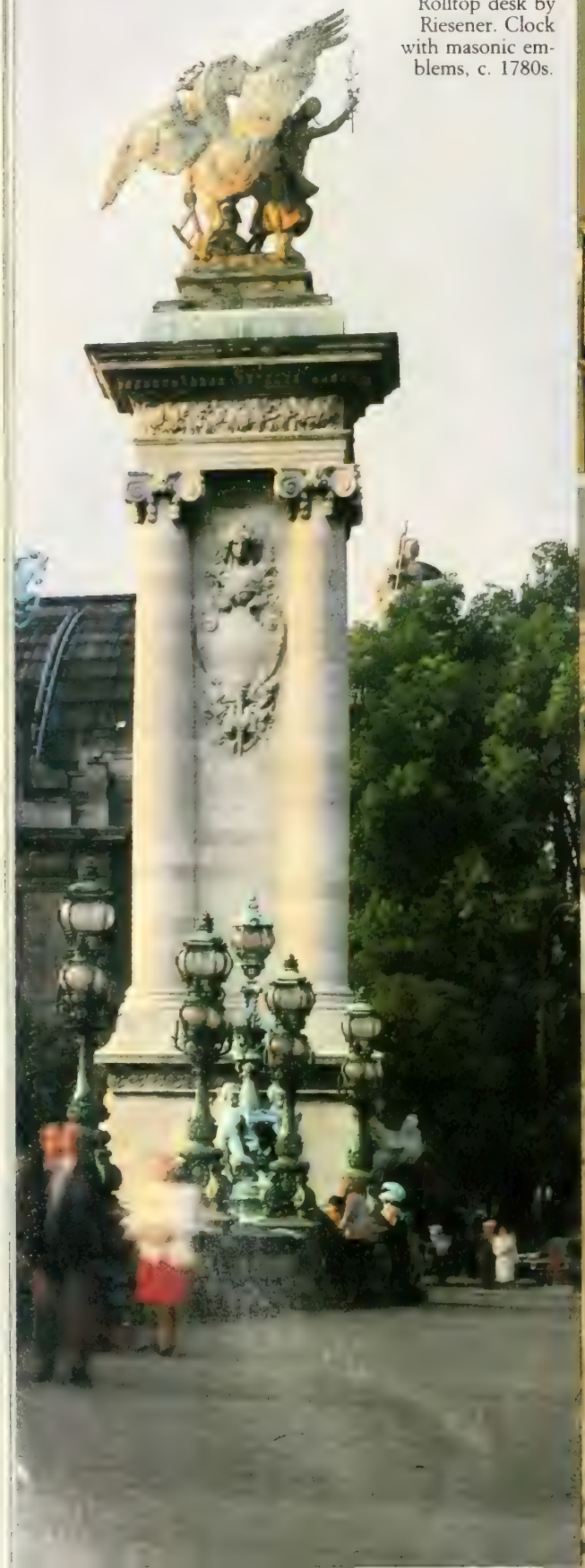
Part highfalutin' museum exhibition, part pulse-throbbing bazaar, part continuous high-style party, the Paris Biennale des Antiquaires is the most satisfying antiques fair in the world

Every two years the world that loves furniture, pictures, and objects comes to Paris to a superb exhibition of museum-quality pieces that are all for sale. Almost a hundred dealers—French, Belgian, German, and English—begin to think about what to bring to the Biennale des Antiquaires long ahead. Ideally they must produce something with a royal or exotic provenance, something little seen on the market, an oddity or rarity, a piece bought from a private collection rather than at auction. Among the dealers these drop-dead artifacts are known as Biennale pieces. Their purpose is to awe, educate, and delight. It is for these extraordinary things that 300,000 people converge on the Grand Palais.

A week before the opening the cavernous, glamorous crystal-palace interior had its ceiling lowered with a transparent tenting of gauze to give the exhibition a domestic scale. Decorators installed the dealers' booths: a Greek temple, an 18th-century pavilion or sitting room or hall, 19th-century bedrooms and dining rooms, an all-white museum room for the display of Oriental objects. As usual, two nights before the three-week exhibition began, a committee of experts sealed the 25 exit doors of the Grand Palais and examined the dealers' wares. What was judged not authentic had to be removed. The next night fashionable Paris had a private look at



Right: Some of the best French dealers have been in the business for generations. Pictured are Olivier (left) and Hervé Aaron, sons of Didier Aaron. Rolltop desk by Riesener. Clock with masonic emblems, c. 1780s.





Left: One of the Grand Palais's heroic pylons, now a symbol of Beaux-Arts flamboyance. *Above:* Large handsome German 18th-century giltwood console table at Didier Aaron.

what the dealers had brought. Reputations soared, reputations stabilized, newcomers appeared. Within the following week, as the little red "sold" dots went up on cards describing important desks, chairs, and tapestries, the condition of the market for first-quality antiques was clear: it is flourishing and international, and there appear to be more private American collectors than there have been for years.

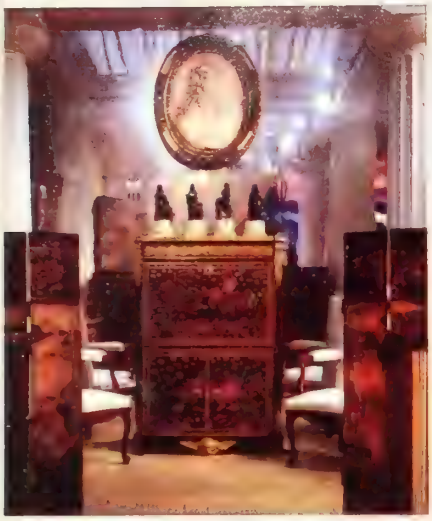
For three weeks a well-dressed crowd came to see what the dealers had for sale. Many were sophisticated Parisians. Others—auctioneers, museum officials and curators, dealers from around the world who were not exhibiting but there to judge the market, experts and scholars whose professional opinions the dealers value—made the exhibition worth attending whether you bought anything or not. The financial success of the Biennale, however, rested with a relatively small group of international *(Continued on page 160)*



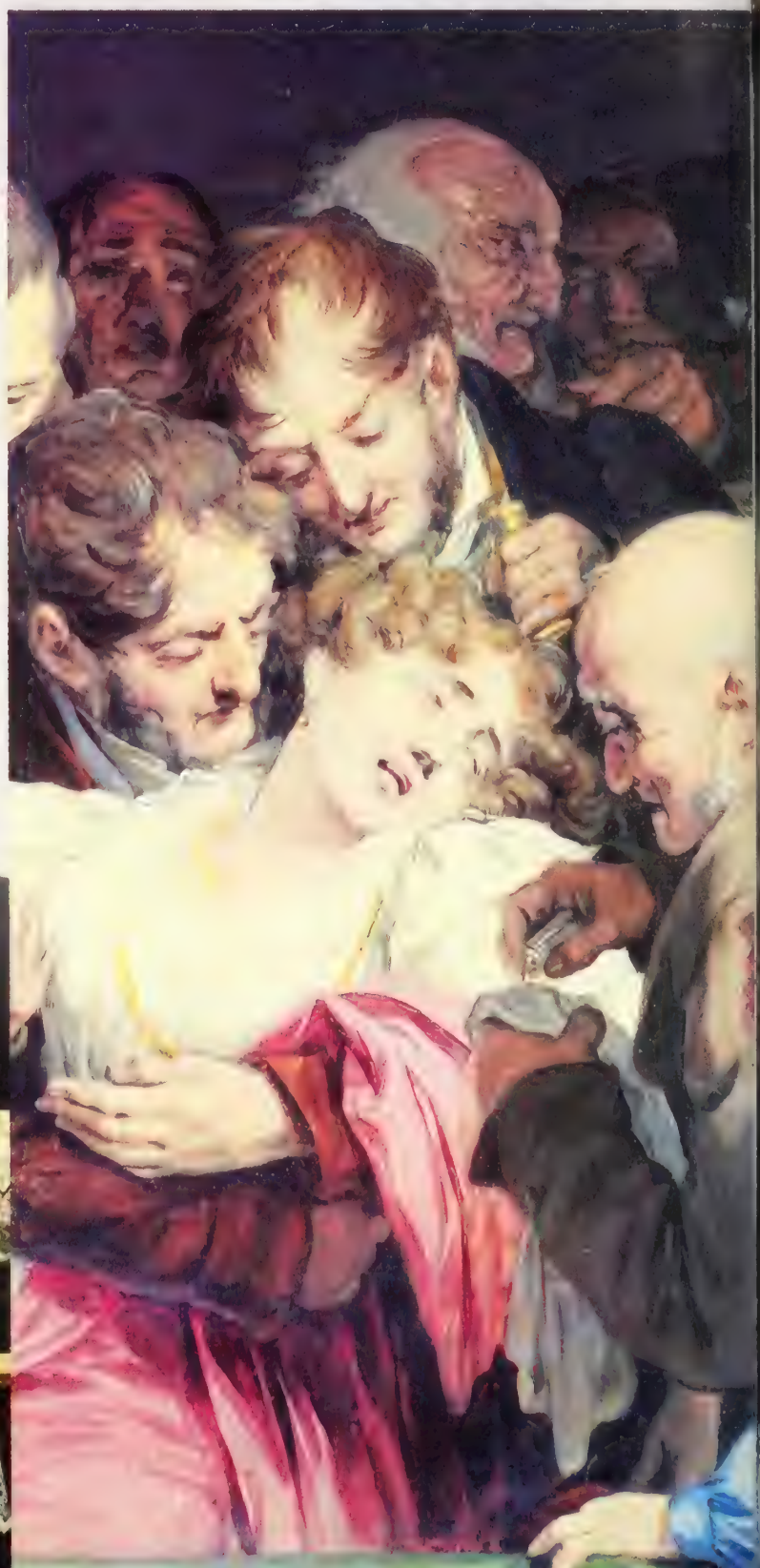


Left: Late-17th-century double-gourd Chinese cloisonné palace jar, one of a pair, at Ariane Dandois Faye.

Left: Art Dec metal table with three-pa movable top by Pierre Chareau at Jean-Jacques Dutko. *Below The Effect of the Melodrama,* Louis Léopol Boilly, oil on canvas, at Aaron.



Above: Jean Hureau's Galerie des Laques. Post Modern Greek temple setting by François Catroux. Neoclassic black lacquer secretary inlaid with mother-of-pearl. *Below:* Ariane Dandois Faye sits on an 18th-century Japanese lacquer chest. Cherry blossom screen by Sotatsu pupil.







Five-legged marquetry desk chair by Abraham Roentgen at Bernard Steinitz. *Inset:* 1930s desk and chairs in palm wood, covered in python skin by Michel Dufet at Dutko.



A CERTAIN GLAMOROUS GLOW

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL WARCHOL





Left: The sophisticated decorating of the living and dining areas belies their suburban setting. Serpentine sofa stretches 16 feet, like a humorously elongated tête-à-tête. *Above:* A corner of the living room becomes a still life with a pair of pottery vessels displayed on pedestals.





Moving from an apartment to their first house gave this young couple a chance to decorate the way they'd always wanted to. Their tastes leaned toward contemporary styles, and with this in mind, they put themselves in the hands of New York designer Bebe Winkler to make their decorating dream come true.

Working with Roland Scharfspitz of Vercesi & Scharfspitz Architects, Winkler took care of structural changes first, eliminating a family room in favor of open living and dining space. The fireplace is more hospitable now that it's been moved from a corner to the center of the living area. A small first-floor bedroom was enlarged to become a full-fledged master suite, with a new, sybaritic bath adjoining.

Because this couple has children and enjoys entertaining, it was important that the good looks of the house be durable, too. Travertine floor tiles, filled and polished for a smooth-as-glass finish, fit the bill perfectly. A sunset glow in every room comes from ceilings painted dusty pink, and in the master bath, the skylight well is also painted pink. The huge living room inspired Winkler to design the glamorous undulating sofa to extra-large scale, upholstering it tightly in a Deco-like style "so you don't get lost in cushions," she laughs. The room is built for all kinds of entertainments. Small groups usually cluster in the satellite seating areas at either end of the room. The overscaled cane and rattan chairs with hand-painted canvas cushions can easily be pulled closer to the fireplace or toward the TV and music center hidden in the floor-to-ceiling laminated cabinet near the dining area. The same ingenious storage is used in the master bedroom, where the laminated headboard boasts a stretch of open bookshelves along its back side. And the bank of doors behind the bed opens to reveal an almost unheard-of luxury: closet space to spare. □ *By Mary Seehafer*

Right: Dining area's lacquered chairs are copies of an old Oriental design. Instead of flowers, a pottery vessel moved from the living area becomes a centerpiece. Vertical blinds are a unified backdrop over a maze of walls and windows. *Left above:* The master bath, its symmetry reminiscent of a Roman courtyard. *Left:* In the bedroom, a Nerine lily plant blooms on an Eileen Gray table. Sheets, shams, and towels from Pratesi.





If these walls could speak, they would tell of a Colonial beginning, of good times then bad, and of the family who saved The Lindens to fill it with treasures

A HOUSE ALIVE WITH HISTORY

BY ELAINE GREENE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY FELICIANO

Once upon a time there was a marvelous meshing of house, furnishings, and passion known as The Lindens, home of the George Maurice Morrises. The story began in the 1930s in Washington, D.C., and is ending in Christie's New York auction rooms on January 22, 1983. Through the years, at home, in their travels, and as scholarly collectors, the Morrises were a couple who immersed themselves in the architecture and decorative arts of the 18th century. Mrs. Morris often said, "The only way I can think I deserve The Lindens is to share it," and in their tenure there they received over 60,000 visitors: friends, Washington luminaries, collectors, art historians from both sides of the Atlantic, charity benefit tour groups. Even in the last months before the auction of the contents of the house, hundreds of experts from universities, museums, and galleries have been visiting for one last look.

Surviving her husband by 28 years, Miriam Hubbard Morris died in her house on June 3, 1982, at the age of 90. Her son and two daughters, heirs and executors of her estate, found themselves facing the grave responsibilities of ownership of a unique and vulnerable treasure, along with a pressing federal estate tax deadline of March 1983 for an estimated $2.45 million. All Mrs. Morris's wealth lay in The Lindens, and her onetime hope of keeping her creation intact through donation to a preservation society or museum could not be realized without a substantial endowment for its future physical and financial maintenance.

The heirs failed in their urgent search for a wealthy family willing to buy *in toto* another family's nostalgia for history—a nostalgia that produced a superb house restoration and an equally superb furniture collection, a nostalgia so specific and strict that telephones at The Lindens are hidden away in 18th-century wood boxes and lighting is almost exclusively by electrified wax candles. And so The Lindens will be emptied out, house and contents separately sold, accompanied by much hand-wringing on the part of bystanders.

Yet the Morris children—all three living thousands of miles from Washington—will say an unsentimental adieu to their former home. Daughter Hillis Morris Garlick says, "The life of a work of art is longer than the life of an individual. After centuries in others' hands, these wonderful furnishings enriched my parents' lives. Now they will go on to new loving homes or to museums where thousands of people will enjoy them. The Lindens was just a long moment in their history."

During that long moment, the Morrises had many adventures but none more exciting than the acquisition of the house itself, which involved a last-minute rescue of a building being plundered and its 400-mile move to a new site. The Lindens was built in Danvers, Massachusetts, in 1754 for a rich Tory named Robert Hooper, nicknamed King for his elegant tastes. Walter Mayo Macomber, The Lindens' 20th-century restoration architect, thinks the house was probably designed by an Englishman, Peter Harrison, who may also have in-



Above: The drawing room, whose original paneling had been sold off before the Morrises bought The Lindens, is the only room without 18th-century woodwork. The Chippendale sofa has a seldom-seen pointed back. Tea table's cuffed leg points to Townsend-Goddard workshop. *Opposite:* Lindens' facade of wood simulates stone.

Experts speak of The Lindens in superlatives: "One of the best surviving American Colonial mansions... the most beautiful stair hall in the country... the most important single-owner Americana collection to come into the market in years"

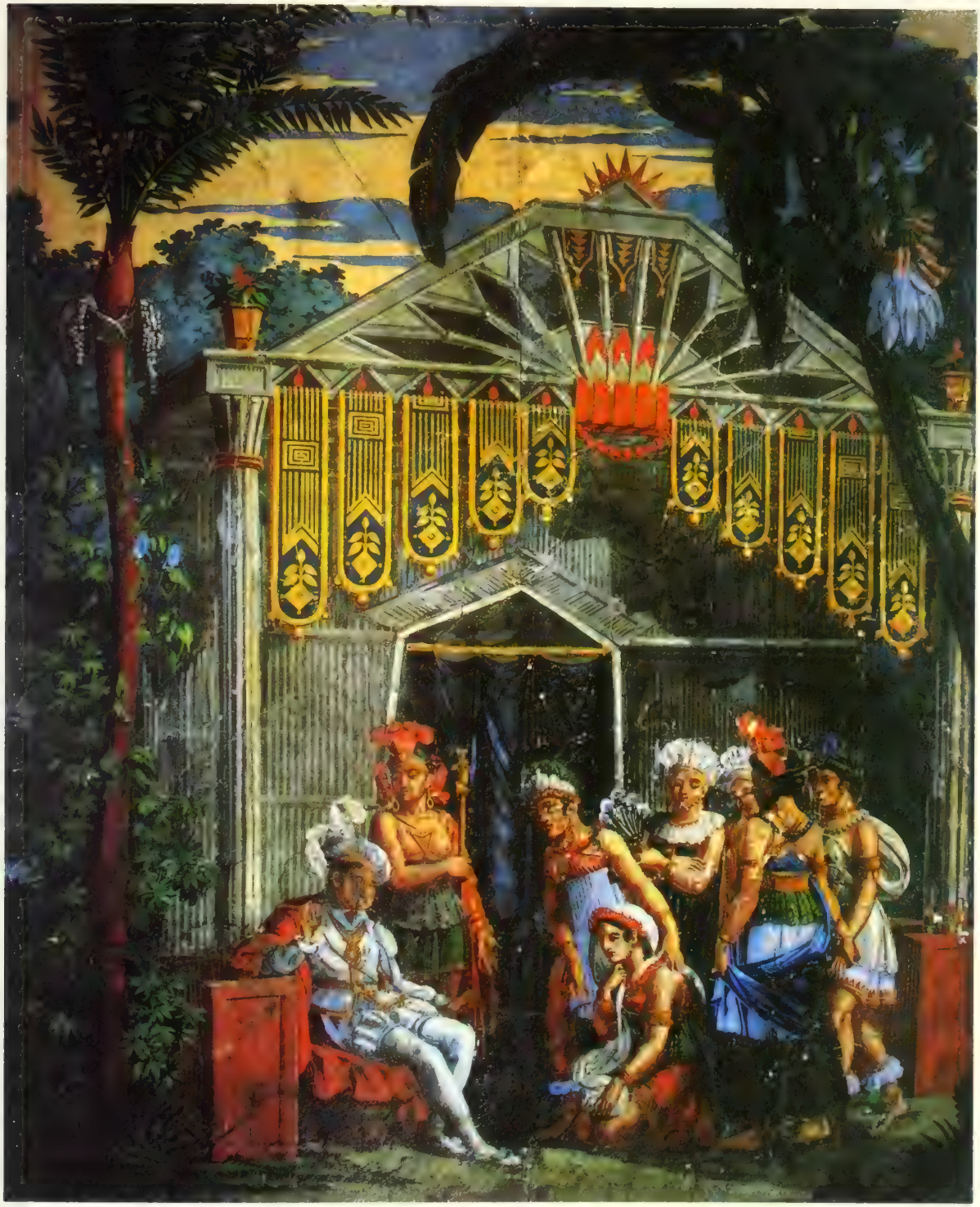




spired George Washington's remodeling of Mount Vernon. Both houses share not only a grand scale and Classical symmetry, but also an unusual façade treatment in which wood boards are cut and finished with sand-embedded paint to resemble masonry blocks.

By 1934, The Lindens stood uninhabited in a deteriorating neighborhood, and one room's paneling had already been sold to the Kansas City Museum. Walter Macomber, first resident architect of Colonial Williamsburg, had been charged by the Morrises to find them an important but endangered Colonial house in which to live with their burgeoning collection of 18th-century furnishings. They already owned a corner lot on Kalorama Road in Washington, where Mr. Morris, later head of the American Bar Association, was an internationally known lawyer. The couple bought The Lindens for $12,500, withstood a barrage of angry Massachusetts newspaper editorials, and offered to re-sell the house for the purchase price to any local citizen or group who would promise to restore and protect it. There were no takers, so they dismantled the building and shipped it to Washington in five boxcars.

For the next three years, Macomber and his own Williamsburg-trained crew reconstructed The Lindens based on measurements, plans, sketches, and photographs made before a single board was moved. Architect Macomber, 89 years old and working now on the State Department's diplomatic rooms, recalls every detail of his labors. Aiming for a fire-resistant structure, he left behind the original wood frame, which made dismantling easier. First the men lifted the finish floor, which bears rare original stenciled borders; then they



Opposite top: The center hall is celebrated for its noble scale, its architectural detailing down to the double-spiral newel post, the landing's arched window, the three complete sets of antique (1825–30) French scenic wallpaper. *Above:* One wallpaper set's theme is "Les Incas," the detail representing Pizarro among the Indians. *Opposite bottom:* Of special interest in the dining room: the set of 12 chairs, the china bearing Mrs. Morris's grandfather's armorial markings—found by chance in London.



Above: Master bedroom includes venerable English needlework pictures and jewel caskets and a spectacular set of 17th-century English crewelwork (detail, *below*)—window and bed hangings thought to be unique in the United States. Highboy is an early (circa 1735) American Queen Anne piece with a noteworthy burled wood veneer.

unpegged and took away the paneling. To remove a door, they simply sawed the door frame out of its old supports with door and hardware in place. The architect supervised the crating and loading of every piece, and lost only one small window to breakage. Peeling off the scenic wallpaper demanded special care, and was accomplished by spraying small areas with water and ethylene while loosening the back with a spatula.

Walter Macomber finds his work thrilling, especially in its close connection with people who lived hundreds of years ago. He tells of deciding that The Lindens' drawing room would be his workshop for the reconstruction. When the underfloor of that room was reassembled exactly as it had been, thanks to his numbering system, he saw two paths worn into the floorboards—"Two paths that served two workbenches, I am certain of it. The Colonial builders, too, used the drawing room as their workshop. This kind of discovery melts the centuries away."

Macomber found the Morrises shared his excitement in every respect—"marvelous clients who became good friends." Miriam Hubbard Morris was the daughter of



a woman who created and lived in a museumlike house. Her mother, Etta Ross Hubbard, ahead of her time, was considered an eccentric by her Chesterton, Maryland, neighbors, who valued new things over "second hand." Mrs. Morris, too, was a pioneer, collecting fine Americana in the 1920s, but she was in distinguished company. Henry Francis du Pont of Winterthur began his collecting in 1921; Colonial Williamsburg started restoring and collecting in 1926. Mrs. Morris and du Pont were friendly rivals, although on a vastly different scale. Among the family legends is the entrance of du Pont into The Lindens' dining room in the late '30s, ticking off the New York State Chippendale chairs with a pointing finger, and exclaiming incredulously, "Miriam, you have a dozen; I still haven't found more than 10."

This set of dining chairs, never separated and of impeccable provenance, is among the superstars of the Morris collection. Others include the Philadelphia Chippendale sofa, which Christie's thinks will fetch $250,000 or more at auction; a Philadelphia Chippendale chest-on-chest; a Queen Anne highboy with an excellent old finish. Almost all the rest has star status, and in their moment in history The Lindens and the Morris collection may have seen their greatest glory. □

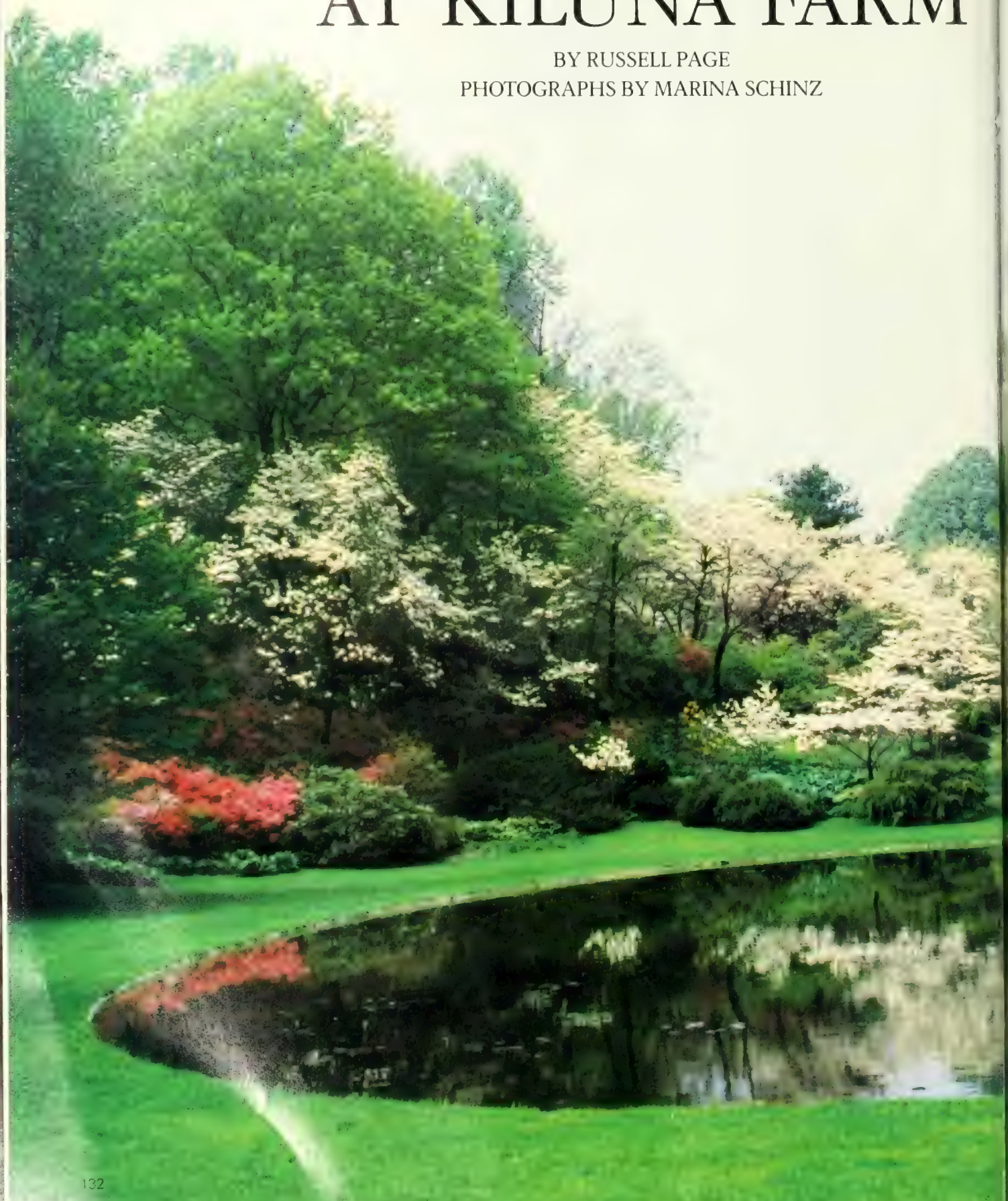


Below: The exceptional Philadelphia Chippendale chest-on-chest, circa 1765 (detail, *above*), and highly carved American Chippendale bed hung in antique damask make a magnificent guest room.

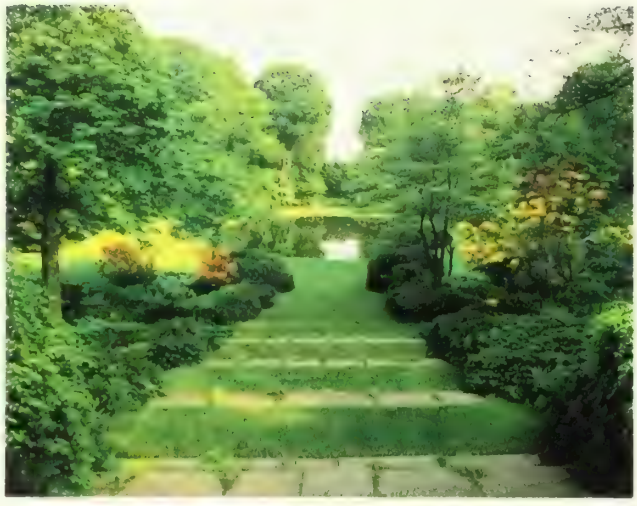


THE GARDEN AT KILUNA FARM

BY RUSSELL PAGE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARINA SCHINZ







Preceding pages Pale spring greens and drifts of dogwood mirrored in the oval pool. *Above:* Dwarf weeping hemlocks and low yews edge the broad grass steps with pink stone risers leading to the pool.
Opposite: Narrow paths cut through the seemingly natural but carefully planned planting of the banks that ring the pool.

A theme of some kind, a basic idea, is essential to making a garden. I always try to discover what constitutes the significance of the site, and then base my garden scheme on that.

The house at Kiluna Farm on Long Island opens onto a south-facing brick-paved terrace shaded by two large trees. Curved steps lead to a formal rectangular lawn framed in a low wall with a central opening at the far end. When I first went there in the mid-'50s, more lawn lay beyond with a small free-form pool in the middle, a tennis court on the left, and a fairly dense wood on the right. Beyond the pool and blocking the view, the ground rose in a shallow bank planted with dogwoods. On the far side of this bank I found a quite large elliptical hollow—supposedly a "glacial wallow" shaped by some large rock in the ice age—that was perhaps 200 feet long by 100 feet wide. The high banks all round it were wooded and at the far end rose steeply to the sky. The surprise was that in the bottom of the hollow, invisible from the house, were greenhouses, potting sheds, parked cars: all the impedimenta of a large and well-kept garden.

I was able to see very quickly what might be made of this very unusual formation and started by taking away the curly cement pool. Next the tennis court was torn out and replaced by lawn. On the right I cut a straight clearing through the woods 50 foot wide and 300 yards long. While this work was going on, all the greenhouses and other constructions that made the hollow a maintenance yard were moved elsewhere.

We soon had a flat oval space with fairly steep banks on either side and a wooded hillside at the far end. On a straight central axis from the house I lowered the dogwood-covered bank and made wide shallow grass steps that led over it and down to the floor, which was at first a flat expanse of grass. Then always on the main axis we made an oval pool 80 feet long by about 50 wide with no border: grass to the edge and the water level flush with the grass. Beyond the pool we cleared another vista straight up the wooded hillside.

Even before any planting was attempted you could walk down from the house into this hidden area, which had and has a special tranquil atmosphere all its own. The level of grass and water is broken only by one vertical dawn-redwood and a couple of magnolias. The planting is confined to the high surrounding banks.

The first thing in dealing with these banks was to make a path halfway up the slope on either side. This path is oval too, and is repeated at the top of the bank in the half shade of the flanking woods.

Gradually the banks were planted with flowering and other interesting trees, then over years of trial and error, with flowering shrubs, herbaceous plants, and bulbs. Azaleas are the main feature. First the Japanese evergreen azaleas in white, palest mauve, and very pale coral pinks. All the violent crimsons and scarlets have been excluded. After these, and some early rhododendrons in whites and pale lavenders, the taller Ghent, mollis, and Exbury hybrid azaleas take over. Again the strident orange and scarlet varieties are excluded so that whites, creams, and very soft yellows are the only colors used. Under all these trees are a bewildering variety of white and cream daffodils and narcissi groups of tulips in soft pale colors, tree peonies, iris, bleeding heart, Solomon's-seal, masses of lilies of the valley, forget-me-nots, Confederate violets, scillas, and grape hyacinths. There are deutzias and dwarf *philadelphus* and botanical roses. The list is endless and all the banks are full of flower colors and interest from April to July.

In fall the Exbury azaleas color well and *Oxydendrons* and Franklinias and Stewartias are at their most beautiful, as are *aronias, fothergillas,* and *Berberis.* There is also a flourishing small tree of *Symplocus paniculata* covered in October with ultramarine blue berries. This is rare and seldom seen. The interest of the garden lies in the unusual configuration of its site, the simplicity and directness of the composition, the careful blending of pale and luminous flower color, and the constant skilled and loving attention of its owner over many years. □

Russell Page is one of the world's great garden designers and the author of The Education of a Gardener.

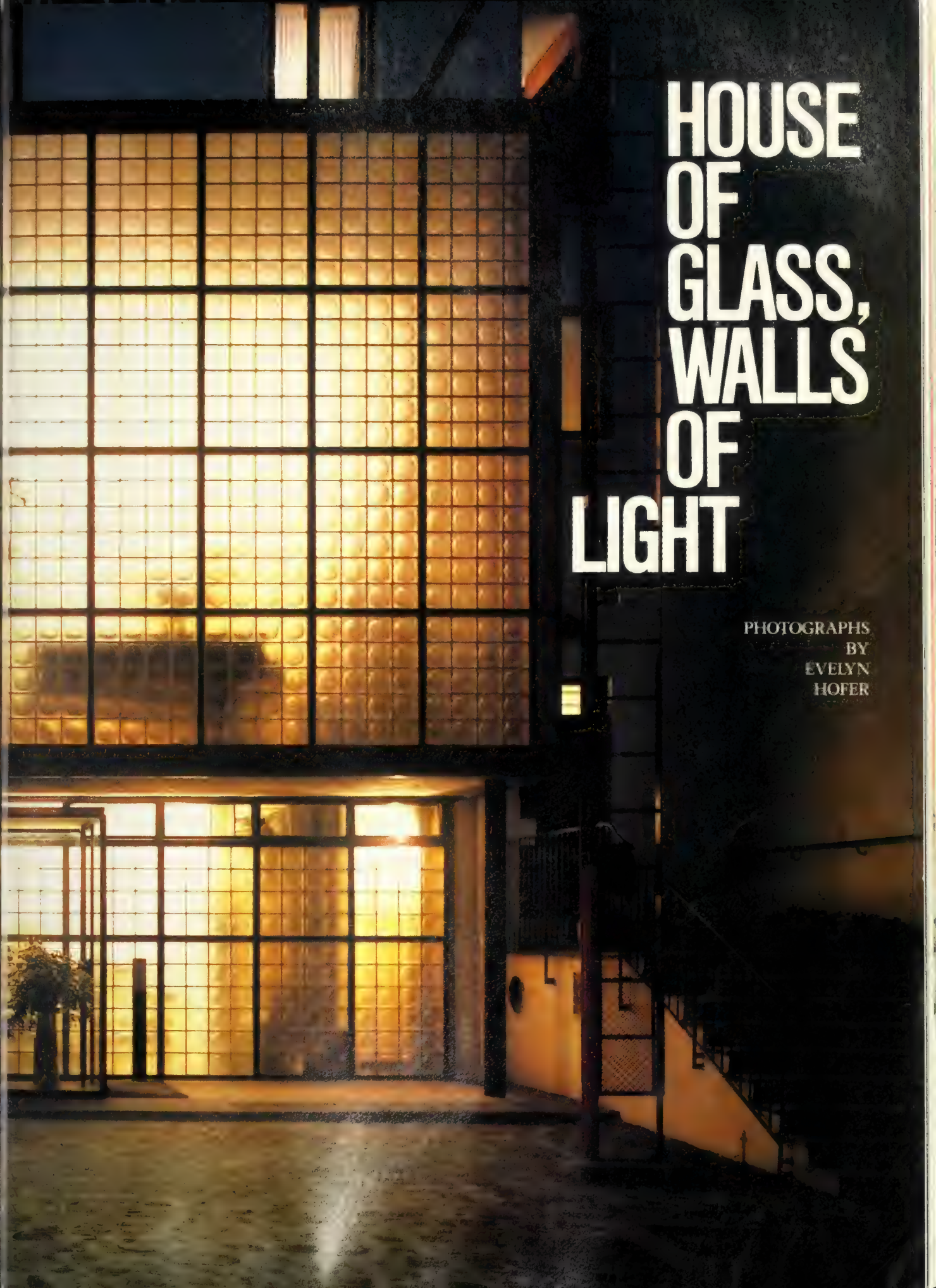




Well placed dark-foliaged evergreens accent the soft pinks, mauves, and creams of flowers and flowering trees and shrubs in spring and summer, and in the autumn, the brilliant reds and golds of foliage and berries.







HOUSE OF GLASS, WALLS OF LIGHT

PHOTOGRAPHS BY EVELYN HOFER





Preceding pages: The translucent façade of the Maison de Verre in Paris, illuminated at night. Designed by the French architect Pierre Chareau and the Dutch architect Bernard Bijvoet, the Maison de Verre ("House of Glass") was designed and built between 1928 and 1932 and is now recognized as one of the masterpieces of early modern architecture.
Left: A view down into the living room of the Maison de Verre from the third floor. The famous window-wall of St.-Gobain glass lenses, at right, admits a steady flow of softly diffused light. The two-story-high room is furnished with several pieces designed by Chareau, including a pair of capsule-shaped sofas, each upholstered with a different tapestry design by Lurçat. The flooring is Pirelli rubber tile, an early residential use of that High Tech material. Tubular metal bookshelves and library ladder are by Chareau and his *artisan,* Dalbet. Painting on easel in front of them is by Lurçat, as are the tapestry screen behind the piano and the painted cardboard screen in the opposite corner.





Left: Chareau's *table gigogne*, or nesting table, with wedge-shaped segments that slide under round table, stands before sofa, another Chareau-Lurçat collaboration, and a Lurçat screen. *Above:* A pair of high-back armchairs by Chareau with tapestry upholstery by Lurçat, 1924–28.

A BEACON OF MODERNISM

BY
MARTIN FILLER

One theory of art holds that no genius goes unnoticed forever, that a great creator will eventually find an appreciative audience. But what of the artist who produces one supreme work that is never again quite equaled in his career? That phenomenon is more frequent in architecture than in other art forms. The buildings an architect is given the chance to design in a lifetime—not to speak of the ones that are actually constructed—are far fewer in number than the canvases an artist can complete in a year. Nevertheless, several lofty reputations in architecture have been made on the merits of a single building. That is the case with Pierre Chareau, the French furniture designer and architect (without formal training) who was born a century ago this year.

Chareau's masterpiece was the Maison de Verre ("House of Glass"), an early modern residence on the Left Bank of Paris. Designed and built between 1928 and 1932, it has long been a cult object among architectural professionals but only recently has become more widely recognized as one of the finest buildings of the 20th century. Designed in collaboration with the Dutch architect Bernard Bijvoet (pronounced Bye-FOOT, to rhyme with book), the Maison de Verre is missing from most survey books on modern architecture published before 1970, but it's a fair bet that it will figure prominently when the definitive studies of the art of our times are written.

The Maison de Verre was the fulfillment of mankind's crystal dream. Architects had fantasized for centuries about building a house whose walls were made of glass rather than masonry. The crucial technological advances of steel-frame and reinforced-concrete construction during the late 19th century at last made it possible. If the famous Crystal Palace, built in London in 1851, was an auspicious beginning, then the Maison de Verre was a brilliant culmination.

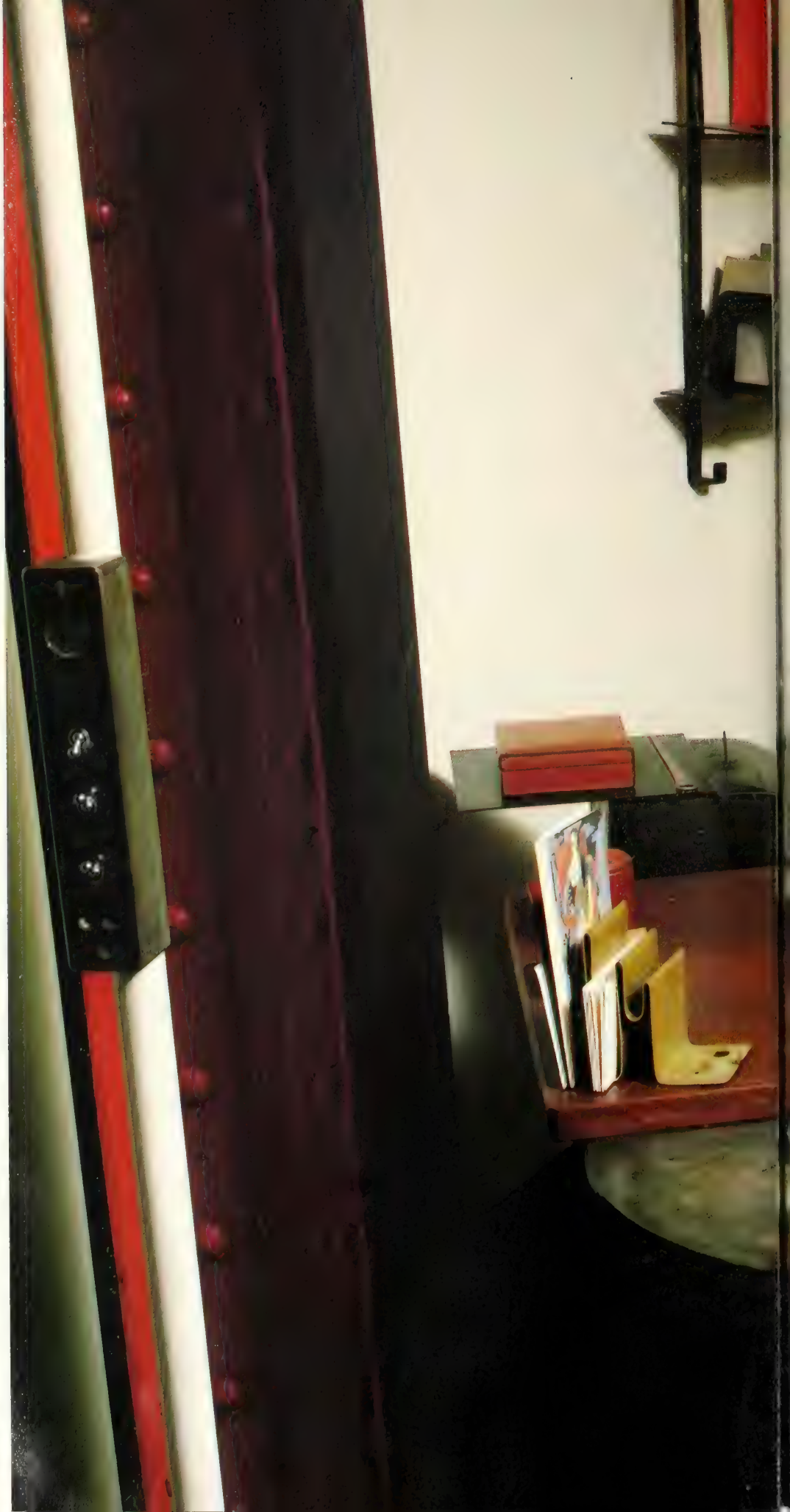
The setting of the Maison de Verre, a quiet street in the Faubourg St.-Germain, suggests just how revolutionary this building really was. The formidable old *hôtels particuliers* around it followed the usual format of courtyard, house, and garden behind walls that met the street line; although the Maison de Verre is schematically the same, it is formally astonishing. During the day it seems as pure as a shoji screen among fussy French 18th-century armoires; at night it is like a glowing lantern.

Above all, its most impressive characteristic is its eternal modernity. The Maison de Verre is the epitome of the Modernist belief *(Continued on page 154)*

Opposite end of living room seen on pages 140–141. Game table by Chareau in foreground has folding top, shown closed here, with triangular leaves that fold out to form a larger square set on a diagonal. Stairway behind table leads down to the first floor, where Dr. Dalsace conducted his medical practice. Dumbwaiter in niche at left was used to hoist linen from the doctor's offices up to the *lingerie* on the third floor, behind the window above niche. This corner of the living room, with its structural elements boldly exposed and emphasized, still has a remarkably contemporary appearance.




GLOSSAIRE



A corner of the small sitting room used by Anna Bernheim Dalsace, the enlightened client who commissioned the house along with her husband, Dr. Jean Dalsace, a gynecologist whose medical offices were located on the first floor. The curving desk is leather and metal, the high-back armchair behind it a design by Chareau with tapestry upholstery by Lurçat, who also painted the small picture on the wall.





AN INSIDER'S VIEW

BY
MARC VELLAY

The Maison de Verre has been visited a thousand times and commented on a hundred, but mostly by architects. One point of view has up to now been singularly absent: that of the owners. It is, however, the extraordinary symbiosis between the architect Chareau and his clients Jean and Anna Dalsace that gave birth to this fascinating house. Now that four generations can speak of life in the Maison de Verre, one can see how well the house has kept its promises: clearly of its time, yet still up to date.

Recently, many authors have seen in the Maison de Verre one of the roots of the High Tech movement. The idea is seductive, but has its limits. Today High Tech is largely if not entirely a matter of visual style. In 1930 the utilization of industrial techniques and materials was the response to a desire for efficiency, and their more forbidding aspects were subdued by their inclusion in a framework created by skillful and gifted artisans.

In the Dalsace house industrial solutions to problems of daily living are numerous but in no case do they overwhelm the final result. Neither

Right: In the master bedroom, a pivoting night table by Chareau holds a photograph of Mme. Dalsace's brother who was killed in World War I. The bed, also by Chareau, is covered with a guanaco spread. *Above:* Guest bedroom faces garden. Pipistrello ("bat") lamp behind the bed was designed by Gae Aulenti in 1965.



the train windows of the little blue salon or the ship's ladder that links it to Mme. Dalsace's bedroom are simple transpositions. Placed next to each other, the four windows in question are framed in fixed-glass panes that enlarge the view of the garden both in height and width. When in 1973 it was necessary to redo that fraction of the garden façade because rust had gotten into it, we had again to turn to the work of craftsmen. The bands of leather necessary for the joints and the brass bolts were made to measure afresh. As for the ladder, what is striking is the luxury of its details. For the air-circulation systems and for opening and closing windows, Chareau did call on raw industrial technology. His choice has been justified: 50 years after their installation, an oil can is the only instrument needed to maintain these mechanisms. In their extreme simplicity latches, bolts, sliding doors continue to close, lock, and slide.

Most striking, however, in the Maison de Verre are the light, the sensitively planned traffic patterns, the flow and flexibility of the space. Controlled, filtered, direct or indirect, light directs, orients, makes spaces work. Three pathways illustrate the three functions of the three floors of the house.

On the ground floor a circuit shaped like a teardrop allows the secretary to welcome a patient at the courtyard door and to lead her in semi-darkness to the waiting room, softly lighted by transparent windows overlooking the garden. From there, following the even light that comes in from the left, and without retracing a step, the patient can go to the doctor when he calls her to his office. Finally, the consultation finished, she leaves, crosses the secretary's office, and drawn by the light from the courtyard comes back to the door. Summing up this pathway in part, Dr. Dalsace wrote, "The ground floor, the professional part of the building, makes work easy and, once their initial disquiet is past, is very soothing to the patients."

The second floor, the setting for social life, is both theatrical and hospitable. *(Continued on page 152)*



Cabinetry in master bathroom is made from duralumin, a corrosion-resistant alloy of aluminum. Shelf is brass. Hinged panel at left swings shut to screen bathtub behind it. Photo at far right center is of film star Gary Cooper.



Most striking in the Maison de Verre are the light, the sensitively planned traffic patterns, the flow and flexibility of the space. Controlled, filtered, direct or indirect, light directs, orients, makes spaces work.

(Continued from page 150) The guest, day or evening, welcomed at the door on the court comes first into a dark zone where only a glow from the garden side, real or artificial, guides him. But he has scarcely arrived in front of the medical offices when he turns, drawn by the sound of conversation and the light that comes from the great hall. Beyond open doors of glass and perforated tole, he climbs the grand staircase: straight without risers or handrail, but bathed in light. At the top of the stairs the mistress of the house greets him.

On the top and private floor the dimensions are family-scale, intimate. The bedrooms are lined up behind a wall of closets with black metal bombé doors. Only the master bathroom isolates the master bedroom from the children's rooms. The circulation is double, internal and external. Internally parents and children can visit from room to room: formal or informal, friendly or disciplinary visits. The external corridor is separated from the great hall by linen chests and bookcases, and behind them one can move around without being seen. A housekeeper has access to the clothes closets without entering the bedrooms.

The Maison de Verre was not especially planned for children and really reserves for their sole use just one room. Nor has a child younger than 7 or 8 ever lived in it daily. Nevertheless it occupies a formative place in the sensibilities of those who have grown up near it. For the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, it has been at different times a place to visit, to live in, even at times to work in.

Although rather marginal in Chareau's thinking, a child of the family doesn't necessarily feel ill at ease in the house. He can even take pride in the strangeness of the house and use the extraordinary character of his home to assert his individuality at school. Back home behind the glass façade he can live out his dreams and turn the living spaces into a playground.

As a child at my grandparents' house I created my own paths for myself. Avoiding the main entrance and the majestic staircase so as not to interfere with the doctor's office, I slid around to the right toward the service stairs. In the shadows, clinging tightly to the grillwork, I climbed the steps two by two and passed by the kitchen. The closed door prevented any glance from falling on me, any question from stopping me as I started up the stairs that led to the private floor.

Even if there was company I knew how to climb up without being seen. On the evenings of big parties, at the end of this discreet climb I could lie on my stomach in the long corridor that separated the bedrooms from the hall. Sheltered by the black perforated metal screens, I could spy on the world of adults moving back and forth in the light. If the empty house imposed on me the respect due the home of grandparents, the crowded house took away all timidity.

Slowly as I grew up the house evolved from a place to play to a place that it was a privilege to be in. One by one the games gave place to understanding. One by one the childish interpretations disappeared in the face of rational discoveries. The ladders in the court ceased to be firemen's ladders and become the buttresses necessary to maintain the rigidity of the façade. The secret drawer became a tray allowing tea to be passed in without anyone entering the little blue salon. The ladder of the big bookcase in the hall ceased to be an observatory and became one of the archetypes of Chareau's thoughtfulness and the echo of other light constructions in the house.

As you become an adult, the content itself of Chareau's choices gains meaning. Their implications for daily life, the manner of living that they express become evident. The profoundness of the rapport between clients and architect becomes more and more impressive. When today a group of young architects visits the house, it is the points of intelligence, of finesse, and of passion that I try to communicate. If today I no longer play with the house, its poetry has not ceased to charm me. For me it is a permanent regret that I can explain only in words the importance of the changing light, in just one day or the whole year long. To approximate a feeling by words is always to betray the vision. However, even after a hundred visits you cannot exhaust the house's resources. Where the visitor can assimilate, even after several tries, only part of the house, one would think that the guide or the inhabitant might know everything. Not at all. There is always something new to discover or feel. Here are the tricks of Chareau for cleaning the glass walls, there the flowers on the piano.

For 50 years, three generations have lived passionately in this house. In the manner of the builders, their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren have known how to keep alive the three traditions of the Maison de Verre: medical innovation, an accomplished and hospitable manner of living, and participation at the leading edge of cultural trends. If today's necessities have made family life slide toward the kitchen, parties give life back by degrees to the theater of shadows and lights that is the great hall.

Fifty years old and still lived in as it was conceived to be lived in, the Maison de Verre was designated a *Monument Historique* on May 28, 1982. □

Grandson of the first owners of the Maison de Verre, Marc Vellay is an honors graduate of the Institut des Sciences Politiques. He is a founding member of the Association des Amis de la Maison de Verre, dedicated to researching and writing about the works of Pierre Chareau.

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BEACON OF MODERNISM

(Continued from page 143) that the most functional design was by definition also the most beautiful. That hard-line approach has been largely discredited lately, as a building's success has been gauged increasingly in terms of emotional satisfaction and not just physical performance. (And as we all know, objects that appear to be efficient are often just the opposite.) But the recent revival of interest in High Tech design, which focused well-deserved attention on the Maison de Verre as a major precursor of that style, made a strong case for design that looks remarkably new after more than 50 years.

But modernity is a relative quality, tempered by the times and the locale in which an object is created. The Paris design world of the late 1920s was divided into two opposing camps: on one side there were the purists, like Le Corbusier, who called for a radical break with traditional architecture and décor. On the other was the more conservative contingent whose highly embellished, half-modern, half-traditional designs dominated the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes, which gave its name to the Art Deco style.

Pierre Chareau's Maison de Verre was a stunning bridge between the two. Its simple, clean-lined spaces still contain the sumptuous furniture Chareau designed for the house. These rich, one-of-a-kind pieces, made of luxurious materials and conceived *en suite* in the manner of the 18th century, have a formal and somewhat ponderous character that only underscores the simplicity of their surroundings. The architecture, with its unpretentious, imaginatively reconceived materials (such as the St.-Gobain glass lens panels of the famous window walls) and strong, clearly expressed structure (witness the boldly riveted I-beams of the two-story living room) sets up a magnetic tension between the house and its contents. And how instructive it is for future generations to know that at its inception the modern revolution was by no means a conspiracy of unmitigated severity. In its combination of handcrafted furniture and machine-crafted materials, the Maison de Verre closely paralleled the contemporary designs of Eileen Gray, who juxtaposed those two diametric opposites with equally sensuous effect.

Most great architecture has been commissioned by great clients, and that was certainly true of Dr. Jean Dalsace and his wife, Annie Bernheim Dalsace, Chareau's patrons for his most important work. They had first commissioned him in 1918, a decade before the Maison de Verre was begun, to design their two-room apartment not far from the site of their future house. Both architect and clients were part of a cultivated circle of creative people who believed in the necessity of embracing one's own time, and that meant its art and architecture, literature and music. But aside from their commitment to modern design, Dr. and Mme. Dalsace had important practical considerations in mind.

First among them was how to combine a medical practice and a home in the same building. Dr. Dalsace, a gynecologist, was sensitive to the influence that design can have on a patient's treatment and wanted an office environment that would be serene, private, and flexible. Those same principles were to apply to the house as a whole, allowing the doctor's consultation rooms to be totally separable from the family's quarters and yet logically connected with them, just as one's professional and private lives ought to interrelate and yet not become confused with one another.

Although the program of the house was well expressed by the clients and sympathetically executed by the architect, their plans came to an abrupt halt when a recalcitrant elderly tenant of a top-floor apartment in the building Chareau was to transform refused to move. She was adamant, and there was no alternative but to build around her; the old house was literally demolished beneath her (with a stairway preserved to give her access to her flat) and the new additions inserted below like drawers in a bureau.

The analogy to an ingenious piece of cabinetry is apt not only because of Chareau's earlier specialty of furniture design, but because of the remarkable way in which the interiors of the Maison de Verre open onto and close off from one another. The pivoting radial door that separates the doctor's offices from the family portions of the house, the sliding wall on the second floor that screens the doctor's private study from

he two-story living room, the wheeled ibrary steps in that room, a hinged pri-vacy screen in the master bathroom, adjustable mirrors and pivoting ward-obes all give extraordinary versatility o the interiors. Chareau was aided im-nensely in the design of those parts of he house by his *artisan*, or fabricator, a M. Dalbet, who worked out the diffi-cult details of the objects and elements hat Chareau conceived but because of his relative lack of experience could not fully execute. But there is no doubt hat among the highly talented team hat created the Maison de Verre, Chareau was first among equals.

As might be expected, such a path-breaking design was not enthusiastical-y received by the public. It was treated as an amusing oddity by the popular press, much as the sometimes freakish experimental houses at the World's Fairs of the period were. More surpris-ingly, it was not much more eagerly ac-cepted by the architectural profession, either. The architectural historian Kenneth Frampton, whose classic 1969 *Perspecta* essay on the Maison de Verre was a milestone in the building's critical rediscovery, noted that "it be-came at once part of an underground tradition; its immediate influence lim-ited to a select few who were sympa-thetic to its creation." There the Maison de Verre remained, in a kind of historical limbo that made the build-ing's reemergence after decades of ob-scurity seem all the more amazing.

Its exceptionally well-preserved in-teriors provide a wealth of information about the artists who created the house and the people who commissioned it. Today, Le Corbusier's renowned Villa Savoye, the exact contemporary of the Maison de Verre, stands stripped of its furnishings and survives in a sad state of disrepair. Its less well-known coun-terpart, the Maison de Verre, has the timeless yet contemporary appearance that we normally associate with archaic art, and which we are only now coming to recognize in early modernism. And the house's lavish Art Deco appoint-ments once again have a sophisticated stylishness. Thus the fickle ways of fate and fame have brought the Maison de Verre back again. Ignored in its youth but revered in its maturity, it can now be treasured as a true landmark of this century, illuminating our age as bright-ly as it does the Rue St.-Guillaume. □

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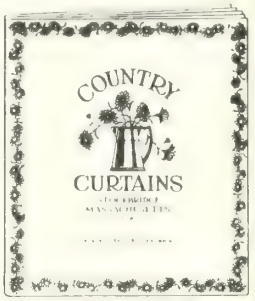
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GROTTOS

(Continued from page 102) Grottos are places of fantasy, but the greatest grotto building is, and always has been, functional: from the *cryptoportici* of the Roman villas (underground passageways one could take from one building to another to avoid the heat of the day), or that stupendous achievement of Roman engineering, the Emissario of Lake Albano (the subject of one of Piranesi's most haunting books of engravings), to such modern fantasy lands as the limestone caves, over 600 feet long, that house the operations of the Brunson Instrument Company in Kansas City, Missouri; or the miles of underground shopping streets in Osaka; or the vast caverns dug in the mountain behind the National Museum in Taipei that store the innumerable art treasures that Chiang Kai-shek made off with when he fled from China to Taiwan in 1949; or the Louvre Métro station in Paris, several stations of the Stockholm subway system, and, above all, the justly celebrated Moscow subway, especially the Mayakovsky and the Dynamo stations. Modern technology has made it possible to build underground on a scale never before feasible: the great subterranean installations are bound to multiply. In Japan, the major cities have miles of underground world, reproducing what is above ground. The result is something unreal, excessive, artificial. Grottos of art, grottos of industry, grottos of shopkeeping, grottos of war . . . all these are functional and yet seem the epitome of the poetry of space. In grottos the functional and the fantastic are anything but incompatible. Perhaps that is why the museum for his art collection that Philip Johnson put underground next to his Glass House in New Canaan, Connecticut, seems like the famous house's twin—a house with glass walls demands one that is sunk beneath the ground—but is not convincing as an example of the grotto in the garden: it is too purely functional, stripped down.

Although today grottos are rarely in private gardens, many tourist-worn sites can supply the grotto experience. The Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico, the Postojna Caves in Slovenia (near Ljubljana), the Grotte d'Arcy near Vèzelay, south of Paris, the Grotte di Nettuno near Alghero on the western coast of Sardinia—such natural caves admired by grotto-buffs like myself serve as well the function of *artificial* grottos. For there is no natural cave open to tourists that (if only because of the requirements of safety) has not been turned into a stage set, or museum, with guides pointing out zoomorphic forms and organ pipes in stalagmites and stalactites with their flashlights to the visitors lined up on the stairs and walkways. (In Postojna, one traverses part of the caves by miniature railroad.) The cemetery is a garden with—generally inaccessible—grottos. But some cemeteries, particularly in Latin countries, have mausoleums and above-ground crypts with grilles instead of doors, into which one can peer. Visits to the Etruscan tombs excavated at Cerveteri, near Rome—such as the Tomba Bella, with its relief-encrusted walls—resemble visits to grottos, as do visits to the catacombs of Palermo and of Guanajuato, whose walls are decorated with upright mummies or artful piles of bones instead of shells.

The garden grotto is not extinct, but it is not in gardens any more. And it is above ground more than below. While the dominant architectural *(Continued on page 158)*

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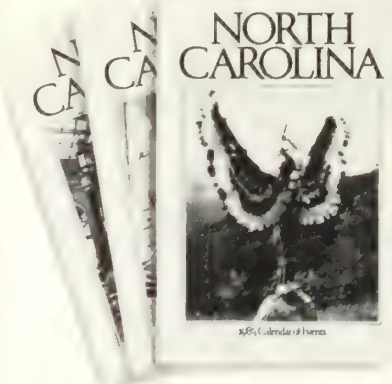
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GROTTOS

(Continued from page 156) tradition for half a century was the machine phase of the Bauhaus style, much of the building that contradicted, dissented from, or simply ignored the hyperrational Bauhaus aesthetic precisely tended to have a "grotto" look; the curving line, the encrusted wall surface, the underground mood, in buildings as different as Antoni Gaudí's Casa Milá and Parque Güell (indeed most of Gaudí's work), Kurt Schwitters' "Merzbau" (with its Nibelungen and Goethe grottos), Frederick Kiesler's "Endless House" (he designed a "Grotto for Meditation"), the Rudolf Steiner "Goetheanum" in Switzerland, and Eero Saarinen's TWA terminal at Kennedy Airport. One of the more flamboyant recent versions is the design developed by John Portman for the Hyatt Hotels. In the first and most successful of the hotels, in Atlanta, one goes through an oddly small, unprepossessing entrance to receive the full shock of the vast space of the atrium. Portman's atrium—over-decorated, cluttered, and centered around water, usually a waterfall—is a deliberately coarse transposition of some garden-grotto motifs.

Grottos affirm the element of fantasy, of frivolity, of excess in architecture and feeling. Garden grottos may be, in the sense projected in garden history writing, obsolete. But one can predict an interminable future for this kind of space, for it is a permanent part of our imagination.

A grotto is both a hiding place and a kind of ruin; it is on the border between the scary and the safe, the sublime and the decrepit. It is also a permanent part of our reality. And added to the archaic fears and apprehensions embodied in the grotto, there is a specific modern scariness. In the 1950s there was considerable pressure on all American house owners to build grottos in their gardens. They were called bomb shelters. □

Susan Sontag is a novelist, essayist, and filmmaker. Among her most recent books are The Susan Sontag Reader, Under the Sign of Saturn, Illness as Metaphor, *and* I, Etcetera.

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(Continued from page 119) collectors, decorators, and museum specialists making acquisitions. For everyone, the favorite game was the analysis of what was brought to the exhibition. Les Antiquaires de Paris—eight dealers in 18th-century French furniture who make up the core of the Paris antiques market—normally produce several pieces each worth up to a million dollars. This year most people felt that Maurice Segoura's sensational offering was a fall-front desk by Riesener that had been made for the Petit Trianon. Jean-Marie Rossi of Aveline showed by appointment a pair of ivory and gilt bronze vases from a Rothschild collection that were also made for Marie Antoinette. Didier Aaron had an important Louis XVI rolltop desk. Bernard Steinitz brought a unique ivory and blue-enamel table with legs like a faun. Art Deco dealer Jean-Jacques Dutko offered a long black lacquer marquetry cabinet by Eugène Printz at a price equivalent to that normally paid for 18th-century furniture. Richard Green, the London picture dealer, displayed two oval canvases by Desportes of monkeys, brilliantly plumed birds, and exotic foliage, which caused a steady stream of traffic through his booth. Paris dealer Ariane Dandois Faye presented 19th-century Indian watercolors painted for the then Maharaja of Bikaner that she bought from the family. Gisèle Croës, a Belgian dealer, brought a pair of stunning 17th-century Chinese armoires.

Serious buyers came at the beginning of the three weeks and hurried to buy the two-inch-thick color catalogue bound in blue velvet (200 francs), which will be one of the most important antiques reference works for the next two years. The Biennale offered the opportunity to see 40 things of great quality in three hours, and Americans like Douglas Dillon, Annette Reed, Susan Gutfreund, and William Hitchcock had a first look at things normally seen in a private room at a dealer's shop. Several generations and branches of the Rothschild family, all friends of the major dealers, came to check on things they were selling as well as on possible treasures to be acquired. Ashton Hawkins, secretary and counsel of the Metropolitan Museum in New York, explained the dynamics of a Biennale such as this: "I was accompanied by two exalted personages, Prince Amin Aga Khan, an avid collector, and Thierry Millerand, Sotheby's vice-president for European furniture, whose knowledge is legendary. Fifty dealers rushed out of their booths to greet one or the other or both. I was privileged to meet the entire establishment of that world in under an hour."

Thierry Millerand, whose grandfather opened the Grand Palais in 1899 before he was elected president of France, spent a week at the Biennale: "The Grand Palais is a wonderful place for the exhibition. It was built in a pseudo-Classical style with modern techniques in a time when France was flourishing. The glass roof rests on the building like a huge parachute. At sunset the light is pink and blue. It seems like a party when you go inside. In America the antiques fairs are more geared to what will sell. Important pieces offered at a Biennale frequently have counterparts in important museums. This year's exhibition was especially refined and stylish. If you were interested in French furniture and décor, you had to be there. When I got back to New York, I had calls from people in California saying, 'I was there but missed you.' That shows the interest."

Fundamentally the Biennale is a show geared to collectors rather than decorators. It reflects the trends in decoration less than other antiques shows do. Hervé Aaron, the son of Didier Aaron who heads his family's gallery in New York, says, "The Biennale is traditionally an 18th-century show. What came as a surprise this year was the new strong interest in 18th-century furniture on the part of American collectors. We haven't seen that since the Wrightsmans and the Linskys were completing their collections 10 years ago."

Though the Biennale is strong in 18th-century furniture, it offers a dazzling variety in other areas. "The Biennale provides a virtual survey of the whole history of collecting," says Duncan McLaren, a director of the European board of Sotheby's. "There is a good dealer for everything from Russian ikons to rare stamps. The dealers who come to the Biennale must be sponsored by a governing body. Their stands are expensive. They have to be established to afford to come. Every now and then, the system produces new faces. Gisèle Croës, a Belgian dealer, astounded everyone with her Oriental sculpture and its presentation."

Gisèle Croës believes her clients like to buy at the Biennale because they feel confident that what is for sale is authentic. "This year I sold more sculpture than ever before, things from the 11th through the 18th centuries—buddhas, stone or wooden heads, Chinese horses, fantasy animals, terra-cotta warriors," she added.

Ariane Dandois Faye is a well-known Paris hostess who 10 years ago opened a gallery after she ran out of space in her apartment for a burgeoning collection of Oriental artifacts. Her choice of Oriental screens, lacquer furniture, ceramics, and porcelain has made her an important source for decorators. At this year's exhibition she was amazed to find that half of her business was done once again with the French themselves. "And even less expected were the Oriental clients. I sold back Japanese screens to Japanese collectors," she remarked.

The Paris-based decorators have always been involved with the Biennale both in decorating booths (nowhere do dealers put so much into a backdrop for a three-week exhibition) and in finding furniture and objects for clients. Henri Samuel, dean of French decorators, now working on an installation of the Linsky collection at the Metropolitan Museum, goes several times.

François Catroux spent a week before the Biennale working out a mock ruin of a Greek temple for the Galerie des Laques. Once the exhibition opened, Catroux came daily, each time with a different client. Los Angeles designer Kalef Alaton came to Paris with a client from California, a trip they have made for the last four Biennales. New York dealer Garrick Stephenson went home with two white cloisonné Indian elephants.

As the weeks passed, the Desportes at Richard Green had several offers but remained unsold. So did Aveline's ivory vases, look-alikes of some in the Untermeyer Collection. The English furniture and picture dealers were doing well with both French and English things. In spite of the socialist government, the French were buying.

At La Boutique, where dealers consigned things for under 10,000 francs apiece, a lively business was going on. Baron Elie de Rothschild, collector *extraordinaire,* had told all his friends to shop there for presents. □

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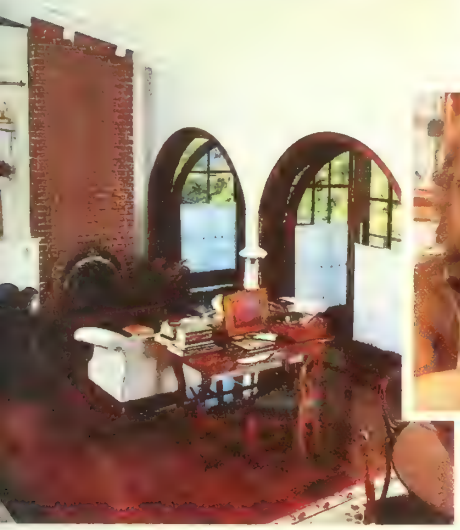


"When I act, I must meld my talents with many people's, but at home, it's my set, my movie." *Joan Hackett*

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Among other creations at the Cottage is a garden house smothered in roses, clematis, and jasmine, which looks, according to Lady Caroline, "like one of Queen Mary's prettiest toques"

(Continued from page 61) Among other creations at the Cottage, Mr. Page has designed a garden house, or folly, smothered in roses, clematis, and jasmine, so that it looks, according to Lady Caroline, "like one of Queen Mary's prettiest toques." In fact, within and without the Cottage epitomizes great charm and style.

It is not surprising that the Somersets flourish among beautiful things, indoors and out, since both share the kind of ancestry that nowadays encourages younger couples to appreciate what they possess. A generation or two ago, this was not so. Superb Louis XV chairs were then often overpainted in brown paint, the ownership of family treasures was so taken for granted that no special heed was paid them. I remember once being taken through the attics of a great Northamptonshire house and finding a cache of what looked like Irish black wooden furniture stacked away. It was identified there and then by a museum expert as part of Catherine of Braganza's dowry on her marriage to King Charles II, and in fact made of Goanese ebony. Nobody had ever troubled to identify it.

Known to the public, if at all, as "Master," The Duke of Beaufort is the most distinguished expert in England on fox hunting, and on the horse world generally. In fact, for over 30 years, the Queen and visitors from all over the world have attended the Annual Three-Day Event Horse Trials, which were inaugurated by him. But he and his wife, the late Queen Mary's niece, are above all private people, looking after their house, their land, and their privacy.

The first member of the family to be ennobled—although the Somersets descend from John of Gaunt, brother to the Black Prince—had a somewhat shaky start, if not especially so by 15th-century standards. Once he had married her, John of Gaunt legitimized the children of his mistress; and it was the illegitimate son of a Duke of Somerset, in his turn, who made a brilliant marriage and became ancestor of the first Duke of Beaufort.

One cousin of the family was the writer Sir Osbert Sitwell, who made a point of hating sport and treating horses at best with distant respect. He has, nevertheless, written with affection of Badminton in his autobiography, and speaks in particular of the seventh Duchess, a century and more ago: "She lived to be an exceedingly old woman, and my mother used to describe her, a formidable figure still, but rather vague mentally, taking her pet parrot for a drive. She always wished to go for a new drive, but the coachman invariably took her the same way; she was too old to be aware of the deception. The parrot, too, had long been dead and stuffed so as to give an illusion of life, and to prevent the storm that, even then, would have rained down on the heads of her retainers had she discovered that they had allowed this lovely creature to die."

Drives in the neighborhood of Badminton remained precarious into modern times. Queen Mary spent much of the war lodged in the house when the Government feared possible German marauders on the ground or from the air. She liked driving out, and whenever she saw a soldier plodding along the road she was likely to stop the car and have him jump in. She then proceeded on her way, without ever inquiring where he wished to go, and because he was overawed he was silently deposited miles from his destination.

David Somerset's grandmother, Lady Kitty Somerset, must have set the note, I think, for her descendants. Edwardian mashers spoke with awe of Kitty Lambton (as she became after a second marriage), of her formidable tongue and her equally formidable qualities as hostess and friend. She was a beauty, a celebrated fascinator in her day and, as a descendant of Nell Gwyn through her father, the Duke of St. Albans, she had inherited a certain raciness. When she died, in her villa on the French Riviera, Cecil Beaton was quickly on the scene to investigate her wardrobe and chose several gowns and hats, which inspired some of his designs for *My Fair Lady*. He caused a bit of a stir among the household, still mourning their mistress, by modeling them himself in the garden.

Her family name is Beauclerk, and the idiosyncrasies of the Beauclerk family since Charles II founded their line have been many and varied. David Somerset has thus not only the solid fox-hunting blood of the Somersets in his veins but also a Beauclerk inheritance that includes a 19th-century clergyman, Lord Frederick, who could only preach, we learn, when seated on a saddle in the pulpit; and a more contemporary cousin, Mrs. Talbot Clifton, who in the 1930s won a major literary prize with a highly original biography of her husband. She had curious ideas of typesetting, I recall. "When Talbot speaks," Mrs. Clifton said to me, "I do not want inverted commas. I want a small blue flame": a wish that defeated the printers.

Lady Caroline's parents have also more than a usual share of good looks and dash. Her mother, under the name of Daphne Fielding, has written successful books. Her father, Lord Bath, owns another remarkable house, Longleat, in which Queen Elizabeth I actually did stay. In the Evelyn Waugh days of the Bright Young People Lord and Lady Bath set a standard of high spirits for a generation that has returned to fame with the recent revival of *Brideshead Revisited*.

The Somersets fill the frame imposed on them by heredity with charm and skill. It is pleasant to think that they too have children who, with time, can help maintain their very special art of blending the 20th century with the traditions of country house living as their forebears practiced it. □

Alan Pryce-Jones was the editor of the London Times Literary Supplement *and is the author of several novels.*

(Continued from page 93) Ruttenberg's devotion to antique homespun, and her country neighbors are always on the lookout for good examples. The fabric encases huge pillows and bed quilts in wonderful indigo-and-natural checks and plaids.

While the city apartment is filled with art, most of the farmhouse walls are coolly bare. One favorite work hangs on the dining-room wall: a Vuillard that is "the theme of the house," with its one-color note of blue and its simple *joie de vivre*. Beneath the print, a blue-and-white floor repeats the front-porch colors and helps brighten a difficult, narrow room, one that the Ruttenbergs found painted dark brown, ceiling and all.

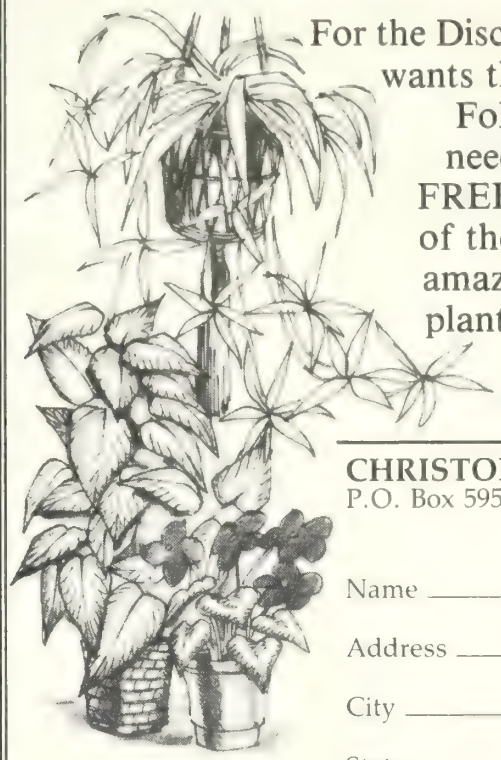
With all the pleasures of the farmhouse and its surroundings, it is the big old barn remodeled as an art studio that most strongly pulls Janet Ruttenberg to Pennsylvania. While attending to family business in California, New York, and Scotland last November, she still managed to publish a print edition of brown eggs in a blue colander, produced by printing seven different plates, superimposing color over color. Her next work will delve more deeply into color printing, and she predicts changes in her decorating. "As I get more interested in color in art, I seem to be thinking more about color in rooms," Janet Ruttenberg says, and she is clearly planning as she speaks. □

By Elaine Greene



Over the drawing-room fireplace: etched steel automobiles by Janet Ruttenberg.

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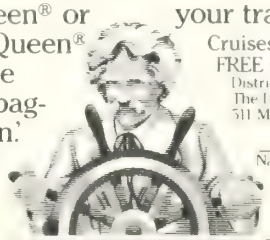
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The sound of construction that was heard all over Rome was occasionally drowned out by the cries of a starving populace, which insisted that bread was more important than obelisks

(Continued from page 83) Papal patronage reached new heights under Urban VIII (1623–44), when St. Peter's was essentially completed. The vast area under the dome was decorated under the direction of Gianlorenzo Bernini, who designed and cast the huge bronze baldachin over the tomb of St. Peter between 1624 and 1632. The twisted columns are based on marble ones supposedly looted from the Temple of Solomon and reused over the Early Christian altar. The baldachin is really the first great Baroque monument; but Bernini went on to create more wonders, including tombs of the Popes, which are represented in the exhibition by brilliant clay sketches. Bernini's greatest contributions to St. Peter's are, of course, not to be seen in New York: the hallucinatory *Cathedra Petri* in the apse, and the wonderful oval colonnades of the Piazza in front. These were commissions of Alexander VII (1655–67), the last of the great papal builders. The sound of construction that was heard all over Rome in those years was occasionally drowned out by the cries of a starving populace, which insisted that bread was more important than fountains and obelisks. Under Alexander, Rome became a city of tourists, and books of popular engravings were issued to show the new buildings and squares. But the Popes had run out of money; from this moment on they were more important as collectors than as patrons. The 18th century opens the era of public Vatican museums.

Sacred objects, many from Old St. Peter's and dating back to the early Middle Ages, were collected together in a Museo Sacro that opened in 1756. The heart of the Vatican treasure is its collection of Classical sculpture; much of it is in a museum named after the Popes who created it, Clement XIV (1769–74) and Pius VI (1775–99). Julius II had only a dozen antiquities in his Belvedere; Clement XIV contributed some 100 new pieces and Pius VI provided almost 600 more. Combining the old collection in the Belvedere with newly excavated sculptures, the Museo Pio-Clementino responded to the cult of antiquity that we associate with the word Neoclassicism, and most particularly with Winckelmann, whose *History of Ancient Art* was published in 1764.

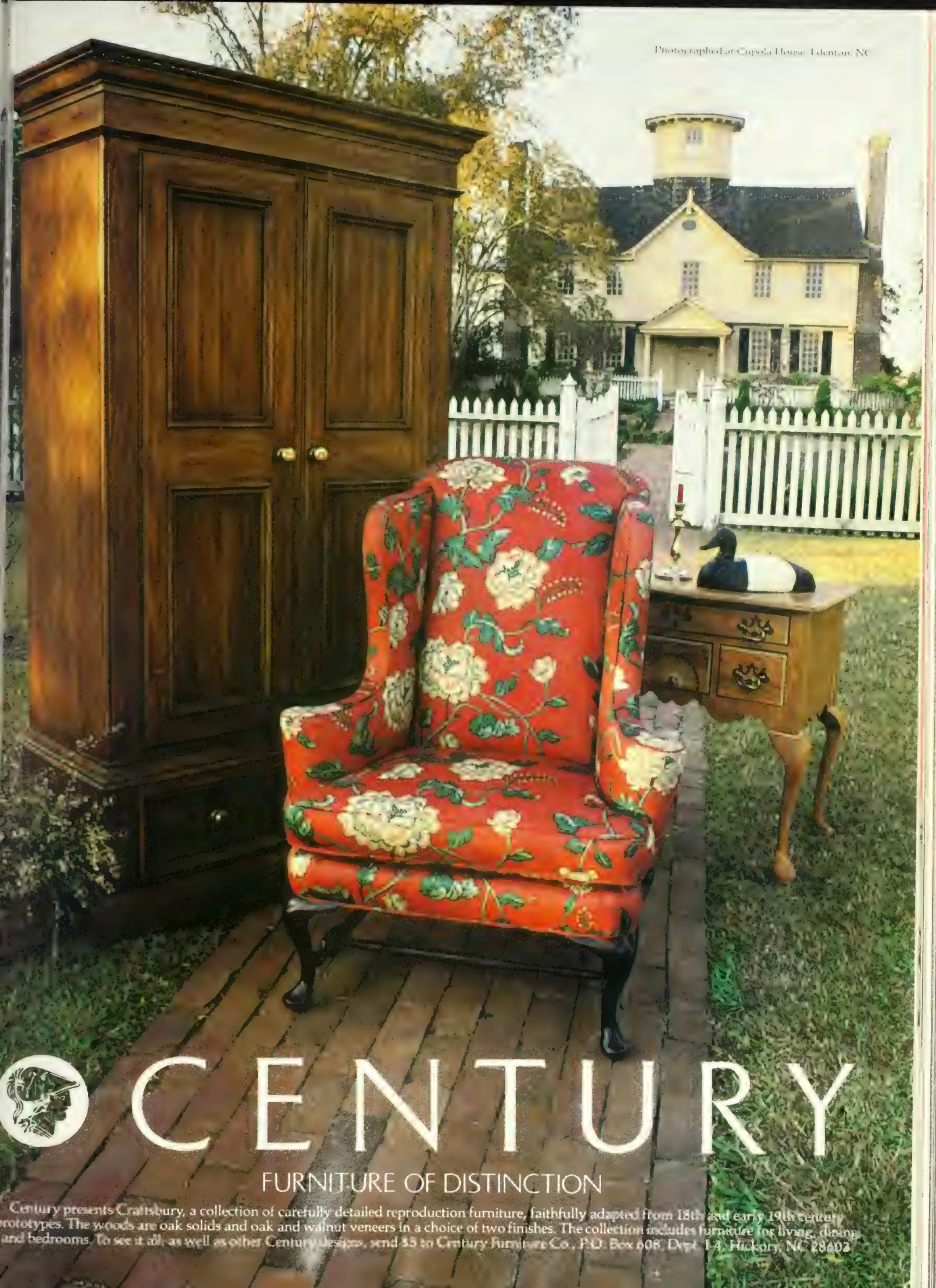
In 1790 Pius VI opened the Pinacoteca, the first public gallery of paintings in the Western world. At that time, it was three rooms with a vaulted ceiling and contained a collection of paintings. But only those of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries were displayed there; any painting from an earlier time was in the Museo Sacro of the library. Many treasures of the Vatican Exhibition come from the Pinacoteca, including Melozzo da Forlì's rare and impressive *Angel* of about 1479, which found a place in the new museum when Melozzo's fresco was taken down from the apse of S.S. Apostoli in order to reconstruct the church. Even as a fragment, it is a masterpiece of the new Renaissance art and science of perspective. The showpiece in New York is Caravaggio's famous *Entombment* of 1602–04, which, until 1798, hung over the altar of the church of Santa Maria in Vallicella. Three of Caravaggio's six Roman altarpieces were immediately rejected by the churches for which they were painted, usually because of some breech of decorum. This one seems to have been a success from the first and was admired by even his severest critics. Artists from Rubens to Cézanne honored it by making their own copies. Now it has been newly cleaned and brightened for the occasion: one of the by-products of the exhibition was a grant to refurbish the Vatican's conservation laboratories.

The contrast between early and full Baroque is illustrated by comparing Caravaggio's masterpiece with Poussin's *Martyrdom of St. Erasmus,* painted exactly a quarter century later. Commissioned for an altar in the new St. Peter's, it was not very successful; it was removed only in the latter part of the 18th century, when the painted altarpieces were all replaced by mosaic copies. The *Erasmus* is grand and flamboyant; the horrid martyrdom is almost lost in a crisscrossing panoply of action and gesture—equestrian soldier, golden statue, brilliant light. If Caravaggio's tone is dark and somber, Poussin's is blond and trumpet-like.

The fortunes of the papacy reached low tide under Pius VI, when Napoleon's troops invaded Rome and consequently imprisoned the Pope in France. The treaty he was forced to sign in 1797 essentially gave the French anything they wanted, and they wanted everything. Between March and July 1797, Rome was stripped of most of her portable art, gold, and jewelry. On one single day a closely guarded convoy of 500 wagons full of plunder left Rome for Paris, where it was installed in the new Musée Napoléon in the Louvre. After Napoleon's downfall in 1814 most of the paintings taken from Rome were returned, but instead of putting them back where they belonged, in the churches, Pius VII popped them into his enlarged Pinacoteca, which was instantly one of the great galleries of Europe.

From this time on the papal collecting evolved in a predictable way, with new museums dedicated to recently discovered Egyptian, Etruscan, and Classical objects. As a result of the Vatican's missionary zeal, art objects were brought from exotic lands: Africa, Latin America, and Oceanea. And as recently as 1973, a collection of Modern Religious Art was formed that contains works by Derain and Rouault and a series of maquettes for Henri Matisse's wonderful windows in the church at Vence. □

Howard Hibbard is professor of Art History at Columbia University and the author of the books Bernini *and* Michelangelo. *His book* Caravaggio *has just been published by Harper & Row.*


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Left: Earthenware dish by Samuel Troxel, 1833. *Center:* Watercolor-and-ink drawing of the Easter bunny, attributed to Conrad Gilbert, before 1812. *Right:* Painted iron coffeepot, c. 1850.

WINDS OF WAR NOW A PANORAMIC MINISERIES

The readers of Herman Wouk's *The Winds of War* will be the first to tune in the 18-hour series, but should they stay with it? The initial three hours dillydally far too much; yet what may keep viewers glued is Wouk's well-plotted family saga played out in a recreated 1940s Europe. Begins Feb. 6 on ABC. *G.W.*



Ralph Bellamy as FDR

THE ARTIST AS THE WORK OF ART

Performance artist Laurie Anderson, known for her highly innovative multimedia presentations, gives the world premiere of her *United States: Parts I–IV* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, February 3–10.



Laurie Anderson premieres a major new work.

THE VIVID ART OF THE PENNSYLVANIA GERMANS

The Pennsylvania Germans: A Celebration of Their Arts 1683–1850. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Oct. 17, 1982–Jan. 9, 1983; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, March 5–May 15, 1983; M.H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco, July 2–Sept. 3, 1983; The Art Institute of Chicago, Dec. 10, 1983–Jan. 24, 1984.

Benjamin Franklin was the first to call them the Pennsylvania Dutch, but, in fact, Pennsylvania German is a more accurate name for the Central Europeans who answered William Penn's summons to live in the New World. Penn dreamed of a Utopian community with religious freedom and economic opportunity, but he based its construction on a practical assessment of politics and sociology. Having learned from his German-born mother that her countrymen's moral rectitude and hard work produced model agricultural communities, he proselytized in the Low Countries for farmers, offering each family their own tract of land. But war and religious persecution made Penn's message attractive to a wider circle that eventually included settlers from the Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, Moravia, and Silesia. In time the immigrants who began streaming in in 1682 and kept coming for more than a century and a half would construct their own distinct culture in Pennsylvania. Today the words "Pennsylvania Dutch" conjure scenes of tidy farms with colorful hex signs over the barn doors. But as this charming and definitive exhibition illustrates—with over 350 objects in a wide range of media—the world Penn's followers created was richer and more complex than its popular image.

These Germanic folk took along few household possessions, but they did bring with them a will to work and a considerable variety of handcraft skills. There was also the legacy of the nations they had left, including notions of how the objects of daily life looked

POUSSIN MASTERWORK ON RARE LOAN TO U.S.



The Rape of the Sabines, a large and historically important oil by the Rome-based French master Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665), will be on view at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, through March 20 and at the Princeton University Art Gallery after April 3. On loan for the first time ever from the Louvre, the painting will be accompanied by x-ray studies, detail photographs, and the artist's preparatory sketches.

and were made. Art was not a luxury to be enjoyed after the bone-wearying work of cultivating the land was done. Instead, the aesthetic and functional concerns comingled. An 1822 description of a Pennsylvania German house notes that "all of the rooms, even the kitchen, were painted in the most beautiful way and the wooden floors of the house were almost all covered with colorful woolen rugs."

The pieces in the exhibit reveal how deeply and joyously felt the Pennsylvania Dutch decorative tradition was. A bag for carrying grain to the mill is labeled with elegant Gothic-style Fraktur lettering, and, for good measure, a heart, a stylized flower, and a horse have been stamped on the fabric. Another instance of this concern for enriching the ordinary can be seen in the way butter was shaped into various pretty patterns with wooden printing blocks. The designs were reputed to have the additional advantage of keeping evil spirits from turning the butter sour.

The care that craftsmen gave to even the lowliest of items is an indication of how committed the Pennsylvania Dutch were to the design vocabulary they invented. This exhibition also reveals the breadth of that commitment, with its dizzying array of furniture, pottery, books, textiles, metal pieces, paintings, and glassware. Each of the particular motifs or techniques employed within the larger style are displayed—the unicorns on the Berks County boxes, for example, the symmetrically arranged flower panels on the Lebanon County chests, or the sulphur inlay of the Lancaster County pieces. The painted decoration is probably the characteristic that most readily identifies Pennsylvania German objects, and historians have surmised that motifs like tulips, doves, angel heads

Continued on page 171

A NEW CIVIC CENTER FOR BEVERLY HILLS

Ask a resident of Beverly Hills what the center of their fabled community is, and the answer is likely to be either Rodeo Drive or the Polo Lounge of the Beverly Hills Hotel. But this affluent enclave is scheduled to get a new civic center that will



likely provide it with a real urban focus. In asking six innovative architecture firms to participate in a limited competition for the new Beverly Hills Civic Center, which will adjoin the old City Hall (a handsome Churrigueresque tower by William Gage built in 1932), the city council sought a solution that would enhance the city's sense of place.

Fittingly, the commission has been awarded to architect Charles Moore and his Los Angeles firm, Urban Innovations Group, whose work has been notably successful in establishing a local identity in places where none existed before. Their scheme calls for several new buildings (including a library plus police and fire stations) in a sympathetic Spanish Colonial/Art Deco mode set around three oval plazas on a diagonal against the city's grid plan. Reminiscent of Moore's dazzling 1974–78 Piazza d'Italia in New Orleans, it displays Moore's gift for creating inviting plazas in a country that for the most part has never quite gotten the hang of it. The new civic center scheme is characteristically Moore-ish. It is another variation on one of Charles Moore's favorite motifs, the geode, in which the fairly unremarkable exterior gives no hint of the extraordinary richness that lies within. In his inimitable simple-but-complex manner, he also makes learned historical references (the triple-oval format comes from the Baroque pilgrimage churches of Southern Germany), pays nostalgic tribute to local traditions, and comes up



with imaginative solutions to functional problems—all in a single design. After some uneven recent work, it's good to see Moore back at the top of his forum. □

Martin Filler

THE NIGHT OF THE SHOOTING STARS: THE RETURN OF ITALIAN CINEMA AT ITS BEST



In recent years one of the greatest of film-producing countries appears to have gone dry. The reports from Italy are dismaying: available capital has fallen off; younger directors haven't received the kind of opportunities enjoyed by their peers in Germany. Since the early '70s, fewer and fewer Italian movies have played here, and of those that have, only one, Francesco Rosi's *Three Brothers,* has touched greatness. But now there is another. *The Night of the Shooting Stars,* written and directed by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani, blends naturalism and poetic fantasy in startling ways.

The film captures a moment of social collapse. It is August 1944, and the war is almost over. The Germans are moving out as the Americans sweep north into Tuscany; meanwhile, in the hills, black-shirted Fascists fight ragged bands of partisan youths. When the Germans mine the houses in a small village, the population splits into two groups: the more cautious follow the advice of the bishop, who tells them to gather in the cathedral as the Germans have ordered. The others, suspicious of the Germans and Fascists, who are vindictive in defeat, set out into the countryside to find the advancing American Army. The first group is betrayed; the second goes through hell but survives.

Continued on page 170

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(Continued from page 168) Most of the story is seen through the eyes of a mischievous six-year-old girl, Nicola, who travels with the villagers seeking freedom. At the very beginning of the movie, as a priest with burning eyes proclaims that the Day of Judgment is at hand, Nicola, sitting in church, looks at a painting of the damned writhing in torment. She sees one of the sufferers with his eyes crossed in agony, and she crosses her eyes right back at him. *The Night of the Shooting Stars* might be called a cross-eyed view of the Day of Judgment. Nothing turns out the way you would expect. The girl herself, a little devil with a white ribbon in her hair, feels nothing more profound than excitement over the break in normal routine. As she sits with the escaping villagers on a hillside, awaiting the sound of German mines blowing up the village, she can only think that she's never had so much fun in her life. Later, the villagers encounter a defeated German column: one of the soldiers, gun slung across his shoulders, sings a beautiful aria. The Tavianis are not searching for conventional ironies: throughout the movie, lyricism breaks out of catastrophe in shocking ways.

The filmmakers have captured the collective life of an entire people, yet they never treat them as a mass. They favor scrappy, even rough-looking compositions over the sculptural or choral use of groups (their aesthetics might be called instinctively anti-fascist). The film passes through a series of interlocked anecdotes: one man, breaking from the group, encounters death on the side of a hill; a woman, seeking a platoon of Sicilian-Americans, dies in a grove of olive trees; another breaks free and has an absurd adventure; one falls in love. And always, the group moves on, accepting tragedy or joy without fuss.

The movie reaches an astonishing climax: the villagers link up with a group of partisans—bandits, really—who are harvesting wheat in order to prevent the Fascists from getting the crop. Suddenly, the black shirts appear, and everyone scatters in the wheat field. There follows a series of deadly and bizarre encounters. Men stand up in the golden wheat and shoot

childhood friends who have joined the other side; an ancient woman is shot for no reason at all, out of panic. When a Fascist kills an elderly man who is forever quoting *The Iliad,* the man's granddaughter, Nicola, has a vision of revenge carried out by Greek soldiers in full battle armor, hurling their spears. The *Dies Irae* sounds from Verdi's *Requiem;* it really *is* the Day of Judgment. *The Night of the Shooting Stars* has passages of heroic lyricism that match the greatest achievements of the Italian cinema. When you see it, you know that a great cinematic culture must be far from dead. □ *David Denby*

THE VIVID ART OF THE PENNSYLVANIA GERMANS

(Continued from page 168) with wings, and lovers' knots and the techniques of sponging, feathering, and graining are substitutions for the fancy metal- and leather-work that ornamented European furniture in the 18th century. However, by the time their own craftsmen attained the technical sophistication to make objects like the elegant silver tureen or the finely inlayed rifle in this show, the Pennsylvania Dutch had become devoted to their own modes of decoration. And this is to be expected, since what they made was a direct response to their place and circumstance.

The abundance and quality of the work on display here can be misleading. Almost no Germanic immigrant devoted full time to these artistic activities. Everyone farmed—women and children, too, at planting and harvest. Curiously, despite the care and pride they clearly took with the things they made, they signed few. When names and dates do appear, in colorful calligraphy on the surface of wood pieces, for example, they often identify the owner rather than the maker.

In spite of their demanding work, however, the Pennsylvania Germans did have time for relaxation and pleasure. Among the most beautiful pieces in the show are the lavishly constructed, drawn and painted *Liebesbriefe,* or love letters, happy evidence that the full life of the Pennsylvania Dutch included love as well as work. □ *Mary Ann Tighe*

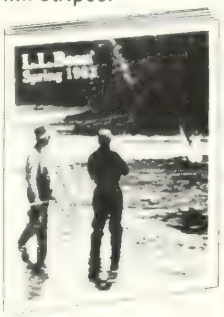
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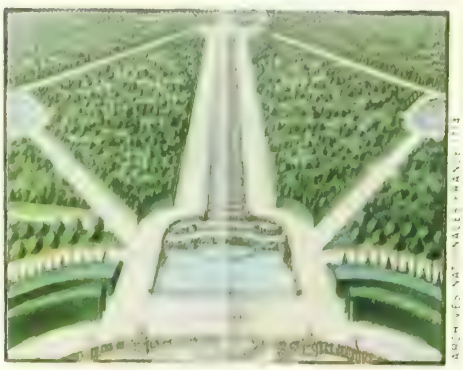
Louis XIV's verdant garden at Marly

By Christopher Thacker

Louis XIV's biggest and most famous garden is Versailles. Here he "gardened" from 1661 onwards, with passion and extravagance, making the surroundings of his château ever more extensive and magnificent to match the growing glory of the château itself.

Versailles became as it was meant to be, the great symbol of the sun-king's power. Yet something less public became necessary for Louis, and in 1670 he began a palace and gardens at Trianon, a mile away from Versailles. Trianon, however, was still too close to be tranquil, and the king looked elsewhere for a quiet hideaway, a "hermitage." "In the end," wrote Saint-Simon in his *Memoirs,* "the king became tired of the grandeur and the crowds, and he persuaded himself that he sometimes wanted a place which was small and solitary. Since he wanted a place of a most modest nature, he also wanted a site which would not allow him to imagine that it could be made into anything extravagant."

Louis found Marly, a marshy valley with steep sides, and enclosed so that it had no view. Its lower extent was so horribly waterlogged that Saint-Simon called it a "sewer." But here, four miles from Versailles, Louis was to make his "hermitage."



Top: Hand-colored engravings of the topiary architecture at Marly from 1709; *Above: La Rivière,* or cascade, in 1714.

Work at Marly began in 1677. It continued, with hardly a pause, until Louis's death in 1715. Although professionals made the plans—Hardouin-Mansart was the chief architect, Le Nôtre almost certainly drew up the plan of the gardens—the presiding genius was Louis himself. It was Louis who conceived the scheme, and his passion for gardening was the decisive force in making this "hermitage" into his favorite residence, set in what was to become the most extravagant, and most expensive, of all his gardens. The last changes to the gardens—with the king's annotations in the margin—were planned in November 1714; the king's final visit was on August 9, 1715. He died on September 1.

The gardens at Marly ran down from the top of the valley toward the small, square palace, then onwards and downwards between two rows of tiny, square pavilions—six on each side. The pavilions flanked a succession of formal basins or pools, descending at last to a vast *Abreuvoir,* or watering-place, beyond which, at colossal expense, the end of the valley had been excavated and opened out to provide a proper view.

At the top of the valley a reservoir (one of several) was constructed to hold water for the great, steeply sloping cascade, *La Rivière,* which tumbled and foamed over 53 steps of green and pink marble, at last reaching successive basins adorned with fountains and gilded and painted sculpture on the upper side of the palace. The model for La Rivière had been the smaller step-cascade at St. Cloud, but this was easily eclipsed by Louis's huge creation at Marly, which in turn served as model for the cascades at Chatsworth in England, at Kassel in Germany, at Peterhof in Russia, *(Continued on page 174)*


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There Louis set up his most spectacular entertainment: the *Ramasse* or *Roulette,* a kind of sledge elaborately carved and gilded, big enough for several people, which ran on rails down a precipitous slope

(Continued from page 172) and at Caserta, near Naples in Italy. Louis XIV was once told that one of his courtiers, the Abbé Anselme, had stood gazing at the Rivière for most of an hour, "almost in ecstasy." "It shows that he has good taste," commented the king.

The palace was small, but brilliant with paintwork, gilding, many-hued marbles, sculpture, and tapestries. Inside, there were only four apartments, for the king and his immediate family, surrounding the great Salon, which was used for the court entertainments—gaming, balls, and theatrical performances. Guests resided in a double row of pavilions, six for ladies, six for gentlemen. Each of these was decorated with one of the signs of the zodiac, while paintings on the outside of the royal palace represented the palace of Thetis, where—so said the poets—the sun-god Apollo would rest after the fatigues of the day. Before the frequent excursions to Marly, the courtiers at Versailles would vie for the royal invitation. "Marly, sire?" would be asked with confidence or trepidation.

The chosen guests at Marly could expect a round of entertainments. For the king's children and grandchildren there was the *Escarpolette,* a swing that held four children at a time—while adults could sit on marble seats in trelliswork arbors surrounding it. There were four separate enclosures for other games, and beside the ladies' pavilions was a course for the game known as *le Mail* (one of the ancestors of modern golf), where competitors had to propel a wooden ball round the prescribed area with the minimum number of strokes. A second, longer course for *le Mail* (for the gentlemen) was laid out on the wooded slopes to one side of the Rivière, and Louis brought skilled competitors out from Paris to play against his guests. On the other side of the Rivière the ground was far steeper, and there Louis set up his most spectacular entertainment: the *Ramasse* or *Roulette,* a kind of sledge elaborately carved and gilded, big enough for several people, which ran on rails down a precipitous slope and up the other side of a little valley. Once the noblemen and diplomats had climbed in, Swiss guards would set it in motion. When it had completed its dizzying course, horses would pull it back to the starting point.

There were quieter pleasures as well. Louis was an ardent collector of carp, and had several marble basins with sculpted fountains, in which his fish could be admired; and for the ladies, there were the "Green Apartments," shady enclosures of clipped hedges, where they might work at their embroidery during the hottest days of summer. On the largest pool, between the parallel rows of pavilions, there were boats for the courtiers. In the winter they would go skating on the great reservoir at the head of the gardens.

All these delights, like the many other sections of the gardens lining the sides of the valley, were given the most vivid and glittering settings; veined and glowing marbles were contrasted with gilded ironwork, enlivened by countless fountains and linked by miles of wooded promenades, elaborately trained and clipped into living colonnades, arbors, and porticos. The darkness of yew was contrasted with the light green of hornbeam, and the smell of honeysuckle and jasmine hung in the air. The details were changed again and again in Louis's reign—indeed whole areas of Marly were transformed in a few weeks from wooded enclosure to water garden, and again to wooded enclosure. Looking back at Louis's spendthrift and impatient garden-mania, Voltaire was to complain that France's preparations for war (in the early 1700s) were for a time halted because the main roads were repeatedly blocked by slow-moving convoys carrying full-grown trees from distant forests to stock and restock the ever-changing gardens of Marly.

Though the site of Marly was marshy and suited to ponds, there was no supply of flowing water. Louis was a passionate lover of waterworks and fountains and so, in order to allow for the operation of the Rivière, and the scores of smaller cascades and fountains, he had a gigantic hydraulic system built. It began with the *Machine de Marly,* a complex of waterwheels and pumps drawing water from the river Seine, and continued with tubes and substations that rose up the hillslope, followed by a noble aqueduct worthy of imperial Rome, and ended at the reservoirs at the head of the gardens. Until the construction of the Suez and Panama canals, it remained the greatest hydraulic marvel in the world.

After the death of Louis XIV in 1715, and during the period of the Regency that followed, the Court neglected Marly, and in 1728 the Rivière was stripped of its marbles (sent to adorn the church of St.-Sulpice in Paris) and converted to an open, grassy slope. In the reign of Louis XVI Marly was noted for its frenetic gambling sessions, a foretaste of the financial collapse that beset the *ancien régime.* Untended, the gardens became overgrown, and Marie Antoinette loved their melancholy atmosphere. Late at night she would leave the palace, walking in the darkness to the highest point in the gardens. There, she would await the dawn.

After the Revolution the palace was sold, became a cotton mill, and was then dismantled piece by piece. In 1811 Napoleon bought the land, stripped of its statues and buildings. The area is now a public park, grassy, well-wooded, with the largest of Louis's ponds in the center. Only the Abreuvoir, the watering-place, retains its original stonework. The site of Louis XIV's palace is outlined by paving stones, and nearby is a notice, *"Pelouse interdite":* "Keep off the grass." □

Christopher Thacker teaches French literature at the University of Reading and is the author of The History of Gardens *and a forthcoming book,* The Wildness Pleases: The Origins of Romanticism *(St. Martin's Press).*



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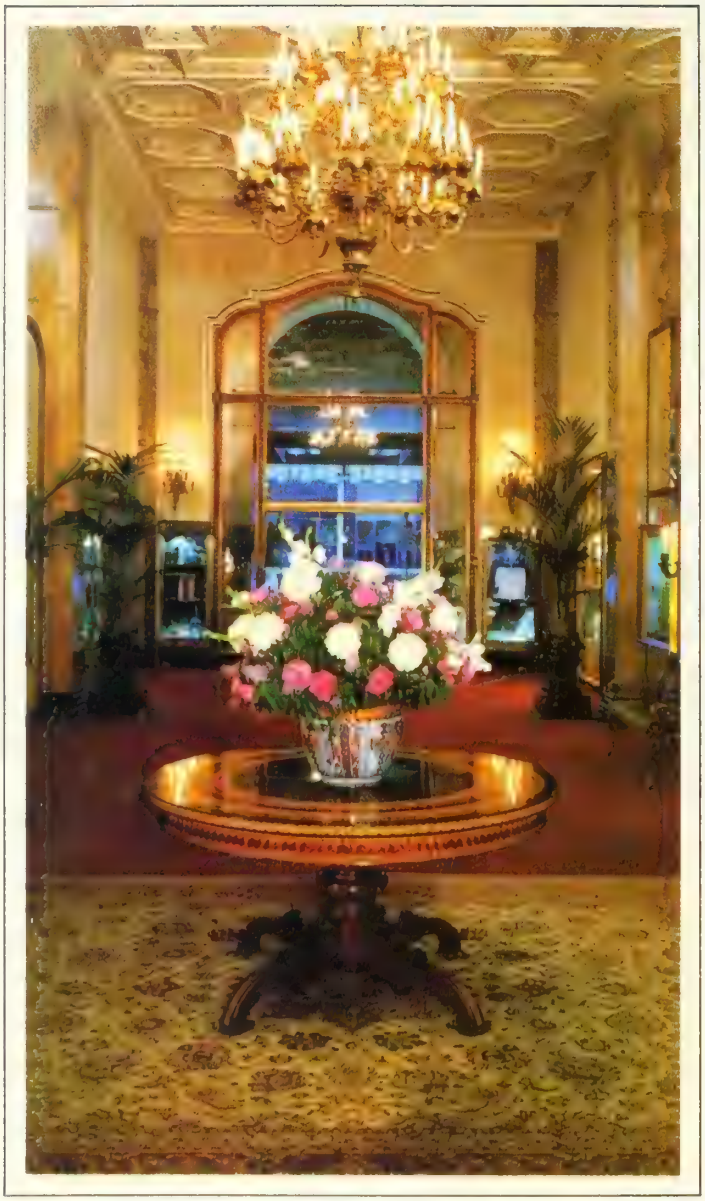
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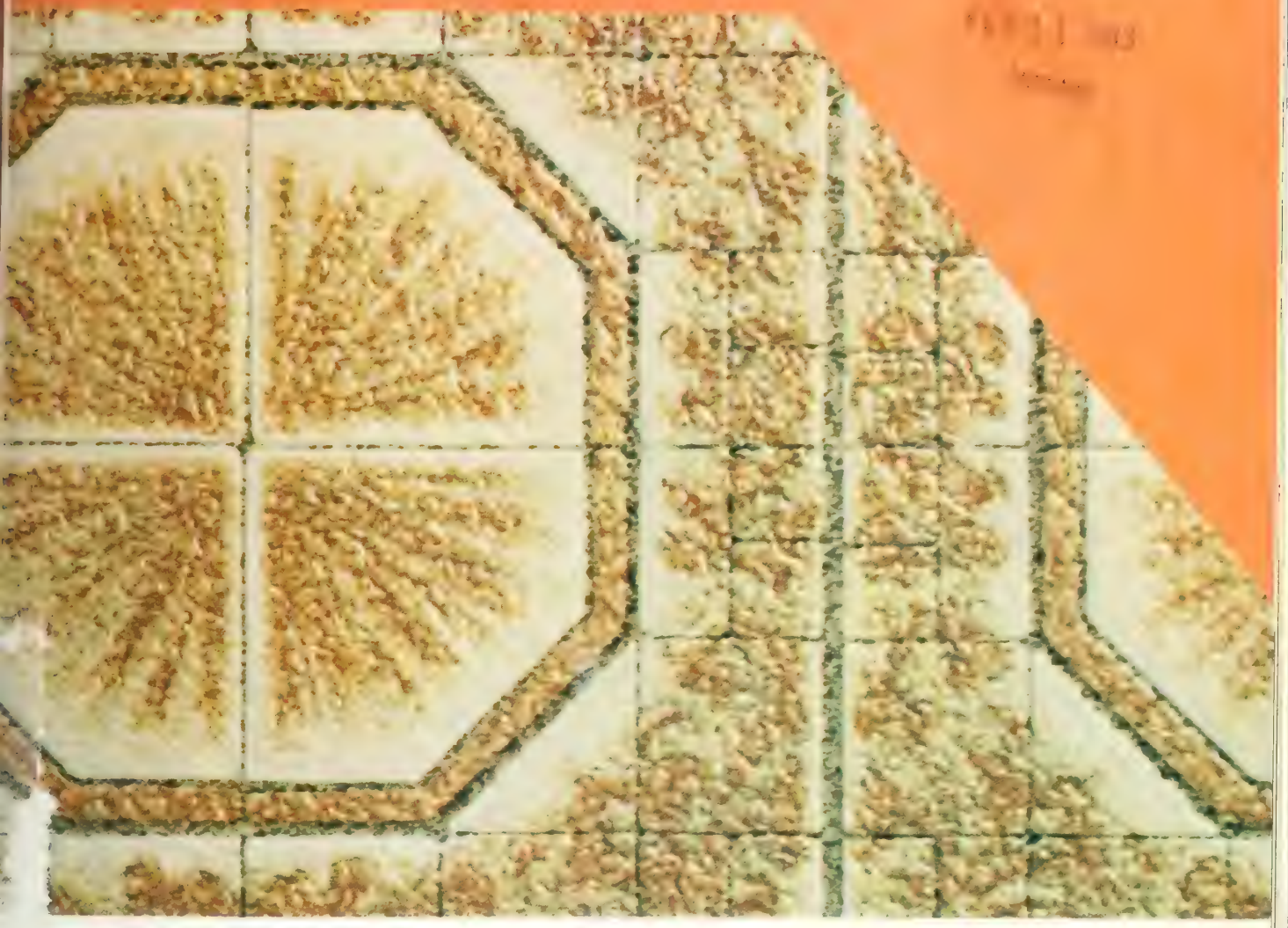
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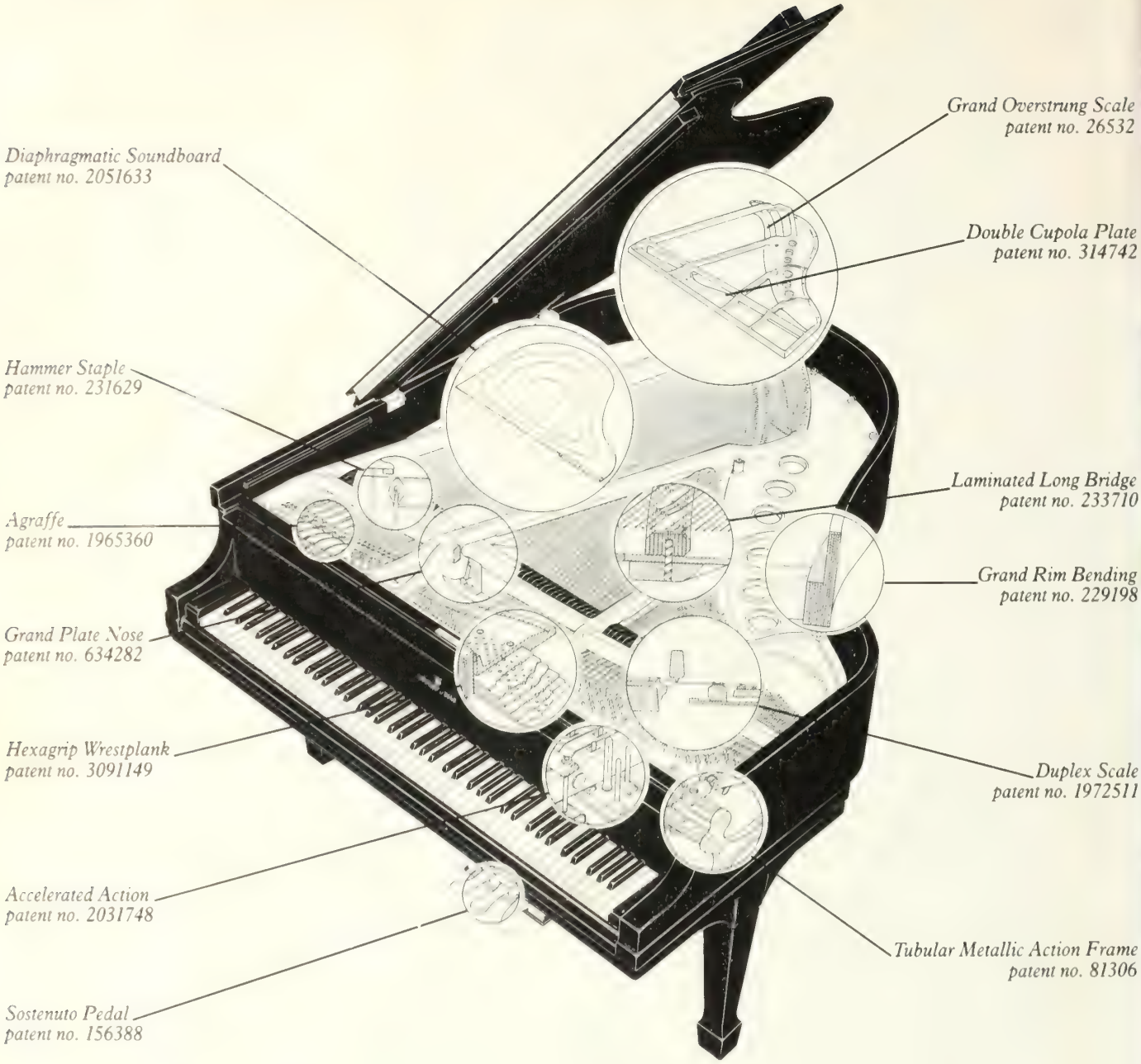
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THE MAGAZINE OF CREATIVE LIVING
Volume 155, Number 3

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DOMINIQUE DE MENIL

The woman who encouraged Houston to blaze new artistic trails

By John Davidson

When Dominique de Menil was a young girl in the South of France in the 1920s, she and her father, Conrad Schlumberger, stood one night on her grandmother's terrace, watching a meteor shower that had the country people believing the end of the world was at hand. The girl's father had already assured her that this was not the case, but the stars continued to fall. Dominique wondered aloud whether it might not indeed be the end. "If so," her father replied, "won't we have been lucky to have seen it?"

Mrs. de Menil, the striking, now white-haired benefactress of the art world, had no doubt inherited her father's unintimidated view of life when she and her husband, the late Jean de Menil, moved from Paris to Houston, Texas, in 1941. Conrad Schlumberger and his brother, Marcel, had invented an electronic logging device—nothing less than a modern divining rod for petroleum—that would be used in virtually all oil-field exploration. Realizing the implications of their creation, they sent their children out to claim the world. Dominique and Jean de Menil went first to Caracas, then on to the Schlumberger offices in Houston, which Jean de Menil was to turn into the center of a global concern.



The grande dame of Houston art, Dominique de Menil, with Magritte's *The Origins of Language* (1955).

Houston in the early '40s was a large pioneering town, dominated by the oil industry, provincial, segregated. But rather than daunted, the de Menils were irresistibly challenged by it. They saw that they might be able to propagate not only Schlumberger Ltd. in this urban frontier but the French tradition of art and culture as well. Though Mrs. de Menil had done postgraduate work in physics and mathematics at the University of Paris, she was preconditioned for an intense involvement in the arts. She had grown up exposed to poets, novelists, and dramatists. Her uncle, Jean Schlumberger, had started the brilliant literary magazine, *Nouvelle Revue Française,* with Andre Gide and Jacques Copeau as coeditors and Gaston Gallimard as business manager. As a young woman, she had discovered modern art in the company of Jean de Menil, the son of a French baron, who had established himself as a banker in France before joining Schlumberger Ltd.

In prewar France, the young couple met Father Marie-Alain Couturier, the visionary French Dominican who started a movement in the Catholic Church of commissioning religious art from contemporary artists. Couturier had the critical judgment and breadth of view to bring together works by such artists as Léger, Matisse, Chagall, and Braque in the church of Notre-Dame-de-Toute-Grace in Assy, France. He took the willing young couple under his wing; guiding them carefully through avant-garde exhibitions, Couturier warned them that though they might not like everything they saw, the work was serious, and they would have to take it seriously. So challenged, the de Menils began collecting themselves, and when they went to Houston, they took their fervor for modern art with them.

Houston had two or three families with significant collections, but they had yet to take many risks on new artists, or to nurture a truly sweeping view of the need for art in the community. At first, they regarded the de Menils curiously, as outsiders who collected artists no one had heard of. But the de Menils had the rare combination of a sense of quality and a sense of mission, and they were not to be ignored for long.

The de Menils made their first mark on the city in 1948, when they brought an unknown architect named Philip Johnson to Houston to design a house for them in River Oaks. The neighborhood was dominated by antebellum-style mansions and modified Tudor and Georgian houses. By comparison, the de Menils' house was starkly modern. It was one of Johnson's first, and, more important, it was the first example of the International School of architecture to be built in the Southwest. Today, with his own nine major buildings in Houston, and through his influence on other architects, Johnson can be largely credited with having shaped the city skyline.

As the de Menils succeeded in the world of business, so they succeeded in the world of art. By establishing the Menil Foundation and by giving generously of their *(Continued on page 12)*

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Continued from page 10 time, they had a major influence on Houston's Museum of Fine Arts and Contemporary Arts Museum. They encouraged the community to take arts institutions beyond charity status, selecting directors with the international reputations necessary to assemble first-rate exhibitions. They also established an art department at the University of St. Thomas. After leaving St. Thomas because of differences over educational policies, they refocused their abundant attention on Rice University, founding the Rice Museum, the Rice Arts Institute, and the Rice Media Center—creating an artistic and cultural environment at a university that had long been dominated by the sciences and engineering.

In addition to their more public work, the de Menils continued their avid collecting, assembling one of the finest privately owned art collections in the world. Described once as "museums within a museum," it includes the world's largest private collection of Surrealist paintings, important examples of Cubist paintings, and significant collections of Byzantine, Celtic, Roman, African, Eurasian, and Pacific works. All told, the Menil collection numbers 10,000 objects, making it as large as the collection at the Museum of Fine Arts. Drawing heavily on these resources, Mrs. de Menil has organized major exhibitions for Houston—her very first, done in collaboration with her husband in 1951, was 21 Van Goghs—which established international reputations for both Houston and Mrs. de Menil. Associates say that Mrs. de Menil works tirelessly on each exhibition, seeing that detailed catalogues are published, doing much of the scholarly work herself, her curiosity expanding in an ever-widening circle.

In a similar fashion, Mrs. de Menil's influence radiates out from her in a series of circles. Her own five children have also become collectors and patrons of the arts, bringing people like Philip Glass, Steve Reich, and Lamont Young to Houston. Phillippa, her youngest daughter, has established her own foundation, named Dia, which has projects in New York, Texas, and New Mexico. Her son François is active as a producer of films. Mrs. de Menil has spurred dozens of Houston families to collect, and through her exhibitions she has educated an entire generation of museum-goers in Houston.

The most visible focus for all this activity is a quiet neighborhood in Houston near St. Thomas University. While associated with that school, the de Menils purchased a couple of blocks of 1920s frame bungalows adjacent to the campus in Montrose—one of the older downtown Houston areas. They had the houses painted gray and white to create a sense of unity and then rented them to professors, writers, and people associated with the Menil projects. In 1971, on one of the central blocks of this neighborhood, which has come to be known fondly as "Doville," the de Menils built the Rothko Chapel, a sanctuary for interdenominational worship, containing 14 of the artist's last dark, mural-size paintings.



In the de Menil house by Philip Johnson, from left: Conventionalized Snake, of the Baga, Nalu people, Guinea; Magritte's *La Clef de Verre* (1959); Primordial Couple, New Guinea, prior to 1850.

After some years of community speculation on what Mrs. de Menil would do with her own collection, she has now decided to build the Menil Museum on a vacant lot next to the Rothko Chapel. Renzo Piano, the Italian architect who with Richard Rogers is responsible for Paris's Georges Pompidous Centre, has designed a long, low-slung building with a gray-painted wooden exterior to respond to the old bungalows. The 70,000-square-foot building—to be completed in 1985—is boldly modest. By choosing a low key for the exterior, Piano hopes to incorporate the surrounding neighborhood (which includes Houston's other two major museums), creating what he envisions as a "zone of culture." But what makes the museum truly bold is that it has been designed to serve art rather than make a monument of itself. All of the architectural focus is on the interior, which is divided between storage areas designed for easy access to scholars, study areas, sculpture and painting galleries, and exhibition spaces, areas that range in size from a large hall to a room large enough for one painting and one viewer.

Friends and colleagues of Dominique de Menil say that the museum, with its modest exterior, is an accurate reflection of the woman. "The remarkable thing about Mrs. de Menil," a friend recently said, "is that she still considers herself a student of art. She has been a teacher often enough but she has never relinquished her role as student, never decided she knew all there was to know. What she wants from art is the mental challenge and she will go anywhere to look at new work. In the late '60s, when most women in her position wouldn't have considered it, she thought nothing of going down to Andy Warhol's Factory, and I suspect she has always been that way—insatiably curious, almost fearless. I've heard her tell a story about when she was a little girl traveling with her family at night in the French countryside. Because their car didn't have headlights, her father would put her on a fender, where she would sit, shining a lantern in the dark. In a way, I think that's what she's done in Houston." □

John Davidson writes frequently for *Texas Monthly* and is the author of *The Long Road North*.



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MODEL ROOMS: DEAD OR ALIVE?

By John Richardson



Main Reception Hall, the Palace of Duke Chao, Peking, first half of the 17th century, in the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Although they still pull in the crowds, model rooms are being phased out of many American institutions. The reconstituted New England kitchen complete with waxwork figures quilting or making corn bread is a back number. Nowadays we are more likely to be foisted off with a few token artifacts, carefully picked for quality or historical interest, artfully arranged and cunningly lit. In some ways the modern curator's approach has changed almost as much as the modern artist's. Verisimilitude and anecdotal details (granny's spectacles next to the rolling pin) have been banished from the museum just as they have from the studio. Once again the figurative has had to make way for the nonfigurative.

Is this trend a good thing? Yes, insofar as the model room of old was apt to look irredeemably dead. By definition a living room is a place for living. Whereas, to quote Ada Louise Huxtable, "the transported room dies an instant death and the recreated room is stillborn." And no amount of props—plastic muffins or plaster hams—or special effects—neon "sunlight" streaming through nonexistent windows, "logfires" with "flames" activated by an electric fan—will resuscitate them. In my experience these dire tableaux only shake off mortality when life impinges in some untoward way: like the boots of a napping guard that I once saw protruding from behind a screen in, I think, Cincinnati; or the furtive pot smoker I caught in the Chinese scholar's study in Philadelphia; or the "Save the Whales" button I spied at the bottom of an Eskimo cooking vessel in a Canadian museum. In each case the presence of something incongruous or fortuitous brought an otherwise moribund display to life, bounced the dead past off the live present.

Much the same is true of those fustian waxwork displays, usually entitled "The Story of Mankind," which were supposed to give children of my generation a rudimentary understanding of anthropology. Against vaguely jungly backgrounds—very *Planet of the Apes*—Mick Jagger–like mannequins in plastic pelts knocked flints together and invented the axe, rubbed sticks together and came up with fire. Because the viewing areas were so dimly lit, these displays were popular with courting couples, bag ladies, and, above all, mischievous kids—hence the candy wrappers littering the prehistoric cave. Too bad most of them have followed model rooms into retirement.



A '40s kitchen in G.E.'s Carousel of Progress at Disney Epcot Center.

Trust the Surrealists to see the disturbing possibilities of these kitschy sideshows. In the '30s Salvador Dali drew on them for his eye-catching window displays. Likewise Marcel Duchamp, when he came to execute his last great work, *Etant donnés*. This assemblage—a lifelike if mutilated nude made of flesh-colored leather reclining by the side of a clockwork waterfall, which can only be viewed through tiny peepholes let into a huge door—succeeds in making voyeurs of us all. Appropriately, *Etant donnés* is on permanent exhibit at the Philadelphia Museum, where it rounds off the world's greatest collection of Duchamp's work besides providing a perverse counterpart to some of the politest model rooms in America.

Waxworks were all very fine, but the Columbian Exhibition—as Chicago's World's Fair of 1893 was called—carried model rooms to the logical conclusion. Not content with erecting copies of entire buildings, such as the monastery of La Rabida, where Columbus began his voyage, the organizers put real people on zoo-like exhibit. For instance the Japanese house, which is known to have had a formative influence on Frank Lloyd Wright, was filled with appropriately costumed natives so that visitors who could not afford to travel obtained an authentic taste of the Orient. Likewise the Irish village, with its tinkers and barefoot colleens, gave *(Continued on page 16)*


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"The presence of something incongruous or fortuitous brought an otherwise moribund display to life, bounced the dead past off the live present"

(Continued from page 14) immigrant families a whiff of the old country. Furthermore, if we are to believe a former curator of an institution that still houses some of these edifices, after the live exhibits moved out, some of the foreign plasterers responsible for the construction work moved in. And it is said that years went by before a tell-tale stovepipe betrayed the presence of a family of Belgian squatters.

Despite the criticisms leveled against model rooms, there is a great deal to be said in their favor. Apart from the fact that these reconstructions of the past continue to give less sophisticated museum-goers inordinate pleasure, they still have an educational role to play, particularly in America, where far fewer stately homes are open to the public than in France or England. If it were not for period rooms, how could anyone in this country gain first-hand experience of the look of things in former centuries? How else see fine furniture and artifacts of the past in the context of their country and time? And how else outside books develop a feeling for period decoration? An important consideration this, for, as Proust observed, people who have made their pile usually do up their houses in whatever style first impressed them. That these first impressions often originated in period rooms is born out by the painstakingly Williamsburg look of so much decoration done in America earlier in this century. For a more up-to-date illustration of Proust's theory we need look no further than the Federal dining room and parlor of Andy Warhol's New York residence—rooms that would not look out of place in the Metropolitan Museum's American Wing.

The Louis XV and Louis XVI rooms that Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman have given the Met provide the most sumptuous examples for today's tycoons to follow. Thanks primarily to the quality of the exhibits and also to the imposing height of the galleries—high ceilings are becoming almost as rare in museums as in apartment houses—the Wrightsman rooms convey a very accurate idea of the splendor and, though less important, the scale of *dix-huitième* decoration. And while these rooms cannot be said to capture the atmosphere of their period (they are closer in spirit to the Avenue Foch of General de Gaulle than the Faubourg Saint-Germain of Louis XV), they have a great deal to teach us about the decorative arts at what may well have been their apogee, also about patterns of collecting and connoisseurship today. In this respect the Wrightsmans can be compared to the Rothschilds of a hundred years ago, whose opulent installations of Louis XV and Louis XVI furniture cast as much light on the taste of the 19th century as much as they do on that of the 18th.

My only reservation about the Wrightsman rooms is that the size of the galleries and the obligatory velvet rope oblige us to admire the consummate quality and intricate detail of everything from far too far away. Fortunately, James Parker, who masterminds this section of the museum, has arranged neighboring galleries in such a way that we can study comparable items of the same period at closer range. Parker has also reversed the current trend by an intelligent use of props—books, documents, and so forth—to humanize the period rooms in his care.

Nor should the visitor to the Met overlook the warren of model rooms in the American Wing, especially the newly installed living room that Frank Lloyd Wright designed for the Francis W. Little house (Wayzata, Minnesota) in 1912. Although this is probably the most significant example of modern interior design in America, I must confess that Wright's aesthetic earnestness is not to my taste. How depressing that a scaled-down reproduction of the *Winged Victory* is virtually all the architect allowed the Littles by way of art. For once I am not tempted to leap the cordon and take a closer look at the furniture—so *daunting*—or those mandatory dried leaves. A perfect room for cultural penance—reading Heidegger to the strains of Hindemith.

Anyone interested in exploring the history of model rooms should read Martin Filler's perceptive study, "Rooms Without People" *(Design Quarterly 109,* 1979). Filler divides his subject into three categories: historic/nostalgic (e.g., the Wrightsman rooms); aesthetic/didactic (e.g., the Frank Lloyd Wright room); commercial/promotional (e.g., the furnished rooms at Bloomingdale's). The Bloomingdale's rooms are especially fascinating in that they have enabled this store to assume the role of decorator. By making "home furnishings" even more trendy, "Bloomies" has managed to persuade customers to change their décor almost as often as their wardrobe. True, French Provincial took forever to go in and out of fashion and the psychedelic style outwore its welcome, but some of the subsequent developments promoted by the store became obsolescent almost as rapidly as last season's skirts.

In theory, Bloomingdale's furnished rooms should enable social historians and decorative-arts curators of the future to chart the taste of upwardly mobile Americans over the last few decades with scientific accuracy. In practice, however, the store's with-it ensembles bear about as much relationship to the way most of us live as fashion plates in this month's *Vogue* bear to the way most of us look. And so far as I am concerned, *vive la différence.* Not that I have anything against exemplars in decoration or clothes: On the contrary, these are more than ever necessary. However, I feel that since our rooms are the stages on which we act out our personal lives, their design should reflect not so much passing fads as our personalities and, yes, our aspirations. □

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LUNCH AT RUBY WANG'S



Thomas Wolfe reveals to a hopeful young writer that when delicacy is required—at typewriter or table—there is a good chance of trouble

By Frederic Prokosch

It was 1929. *Look Homeward, Angel* had just appeared and I was told that Thomas Wolfe was teaching English in the college at Washington Square. I had some inner reservations about *Look Homeward, Angel*, but I was thrilled by the oceanic surge that swept through the pages.

And so one day I plucked up my courage and climbed the stairs and walked to his desk and said, "Would you like to have lunch with me at Ruby Wang's, Mr. Wolfe?"

Thomas Wolfe raised his damp, bulging face in my direction and said, "Sure. O.K. Absolutely. Let's lunch at Ruby Wang's."

Ruby Wang's was a Chinese restaurant in a dirty brick building just a block from the dust and decrepitude of Washington Square. There was an air of great fragility in the Ruby Wang restaurant. The chairs and tables were of a splintering bamboo, and the menu was scrawled on a cobweb-thin paper. The dishes were nearly weightless in their eggshell-like texture. Even the food had a flavor of dejected evanescence. Thomas Wolfe's enormous body and low, grumbling voice made the cutlery look like trinkets in a brittle Lilliput.

We ordered chow mein and drank some lukewarm beer. Tom Wolfe leaned over the table and muttered confidentially, "This morning one of my girls, a delightful child named Deirdre Rosebottom, asked me if I was a cousin or perhaps a nephew of Virginia Woolf. I explained about the *os*: she has two *os* as in 'booby' whilst I had only one *o*, unfortunately, as in 'whore.' She looked horribly shocked. Well, it isn't my fault, is it, that I am not a cousin or a nephew of Virginia Woolf? Maybe it was a blunder in the first place to have a name like Wolfe. There is Humbert Wolfe, the poet, who writes spindly little poems. There is Leonard Woolf, the novelist, who writes about jungles. There are other Wolves also, too many to be enumerated. What a relief to be Marcel Proust! No danger of losing one's identity!"

The waitress brought our lunch, along with some chopsticks.

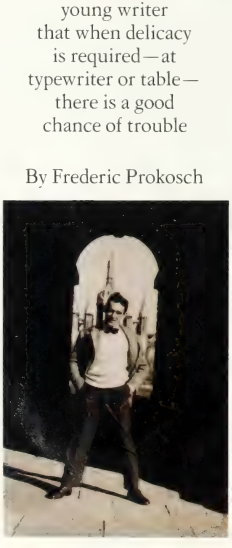
"Would you like to use the chopsticks, gentlemen? Or would you boys prefer forks?"

"I'll try chopsticks," said Wolfe after a sultry hesitation, during which his eyes were fixed on the rice with alarm.

The waitress brought the chopsticks and Wolfe attacked the rice, which eluded his chopsticks with insect-like dexterity. He kept poking at the rice with a feverish determination while small drops of sweat exploded on his forehead. His eyes rolled with horror as he tried to control the chopsticks. But the small grains of rice dribbled and darted from the chopsticks and lit on the floor, in the beer, on the butter.

"They say," he said, "that in every fat man there's a thin man trying to escape. I suspect that in a little man there is always a big one trying to escape. Take Napoleon. He was a little man with a big one trying to escape. Now take me. I'm a big man with a little one trying to get out. All my life I've felt this lousy little wretch screaming inside me. Max Perkins keeps telling me, 'More delicacy, Tom, more delicacy.' I quiver with horror, it's that little man inside me, he keeps wailing about delicacy and I'm incapable of delicacy. I feel like the Mississippi. Let it pour, let it pour! It's all I can do and to hell with the delicacy. Think of *Moby Dick*. It's been called the great American novel. Hitherto, that is to say. I insist on the hitherto. There are greater ones lurking in the offing. But consider *Moby Dick*. Where's the delicacy, now, I ask you? Virginia Woolf—*there's* the delicacy, if that's what you're looking for. Elinor Wylie has delicacy. Edith Sitwell has delicacy. But God Almighty, what can a man like me do with a thing like delicacy? I feel the grandeur sweeping through me, what a big howling flood of it! Don't laugh. I'm not joking, in spite of these chopsticks!"

He made a *(Continued on page 22)*



Top: Thomas Wolfe in the early '30s. *Above:* Frederic Prokosch at King's College, Cambridge, in 1937.



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(Continued from page 20) last despairing effort and rammed his chopsticks into the rice, which exploded from the plate and shot through the air like confetti.

He leaned back in his chair and plucked a grain from his eyelid. "Absolutely devilish, these chopsticks. The Chinese must be sadists!"

The chair gave a crackle and sagged under his buttocks. He whisked it aside indignantly and grabbed a chair from the neighboring table. The glasses danced and tinkled, the beer lurched over the tablecloth, and Wolfe glared at the waitress with a bubbling ferocity.

"Waitress, please! *Une fourchette! J'abandonne les chopsticks!*"

"That's *me,* you see," he growled, gripping the fork with desolation. "I'm too clumsy to use those instruments."

His ravenous eyes roved over the plate with desperation. The sweat shone on his brow. His mouth began to quiver. He looked like a volcano on the verge of eruption.

" 'Look at Hemingway,' says Perkins. Under the bluntness there's a discipline. But I don't want to turn into another goddamn Hemingway! Perkins says look at Fitzgerald. Under the glitter there's a delicacy. But by Jesus, I don't want to be another F. Scott Fitzgerald! I want to be a Niagara, not a dainty little trickle.

"Now, take Whitman," he went on. "He wasn't scared of the whirlpools. He did what he had to and there was no other way of doing it. There's plenty wrong with Whitman and I guess he was a pansy but when it came to a crisis he had the true virility. Not the Hemingway virility, I mean the *real* virility. He wasn't scared of the Niagara! He wasn't frightened of the whirlpools!"

He placed his fists on the table, which trembled precariously, and the sweat on his face caught the light from the window. He gave a sudden gasp and clutched at the air triumphantly. He looked like a swimmer rising from the bottom of a whirlpool. His wild eyes, squeezed in fat, gleamed like a boar's, and the bubbles on his lip shone with a wild exultation.

I said goodbye to him at the doorway of New York University and he said "Thanks for the lunch, pal."

"It was an honor, Mr. Wolfe."

His eyes grew dark with gratitude and he vanished in the hallway.

I walked back into the Square and sat down on a bench. I leafed through *Black Armor,* a book of poems by Elinor Wylie.

But the sultriness in the air made the verses seem unreal; they drifted away like the seeds of little dandelions.

The '20s were nearly over, the Great Depression filled the atmosphere, and the red brick buildings had a look of dereliction. The girls tied their sashes and the boys picked up their marbles and the old men in the corner nodded their heads and fell asleep. □

Frederic Prokosch is a poet and novelist. Voices, his memoirs, will be published in May by Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

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JOURNEY OUT OF TIME

An exhibition of photographs of Tibet, taken between 1880 and 1950, mirrors a trip from Lhasa to Darjeeling

By Lobsang Lhalungpa

"Tibet: The Sacred Realm 1880-1950," an exhibition of about 200 photographs by American, English, French, Russian, and Swedish photographers, will be at the Philadelphia Museum of Art from March 20 to May 22; the Rice Museum, Houston, from September 23 to December 31; the Asia Society, New York City, June 4 to August 19, 1984. In this excerpt from Tibet: The Sacred Realm *(© 1983, Aperture Inc.; $35), which serves as a catalogue to the exhibition, the Tibetan scholar Lobsang Lhalungpa, who now lives in Washington, D.C., describes his trip across Tibet to take up an official mission—cultural representative and supervisor of Tibetan students in India.*



Above: Incarnate Lama (1921), 6-year-old lama Lhabrang-Tashikyil. *Below: Masked Dancers* (1921). Both by Alexandra David-Néel.

During the summer of 1947 I eagerly looked forward to my first journey abroad. India's long struggle for freedom had just culminated in independence, and, like many of my countrymen, I was anxious to visit the land of Buddha and Gandhi.

Our Lhasa house bustled with activity as my departure day approached. Family members and servants packed my clothes, books, religious objects, gifts, and travel provisions, while friends dropped by with presents and the *kata*. In our country it was customary to show respect or greet someone, to express happiness or sorrow by presenting with outstretched hands a kata, a long white gauze scarf.

Communications and mode of travel in Tibet were still old fashioned. The route from Lhasa to Darjeeling, about 300 miles over rough caravan trails and across high mountain passes, usually took three weeks on horseback, although it could be covered by fast runners in less than 10 days. I planned to make the *(Continued on page 26)*





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(Continued from page 24) trip in six weeks, as I wanted to bid farewell to many friends, lamas, and holy places along the way.

For traveling on official assignment, the Council of Cabinet Ministers issued an official document addressed to the administrators and elders of districts along the route, with instructions to provide me and my party with lodgings and replacement horses for which I was to pay but a minimum fee. Certain farmers and landowners all over the country provided these services for the government in lieu of land tax.

Before leaving I sent advance notice to the village elders, the leaders of each district where I intended to stop, giving them the approximate date of my arrival and number of horses that would have to be cared for. Handwritten on a big sheet of paper and wrapped around an arrow, this notice passed through a system of relay runners, each 10 or so miles beyond the last, beginning with a runner provided by an agency in Lhasa. This was a modified version of our ancient communication system when messages were wrapped around arrows and shot to the other party.

Above: Khampa Dzong by John Claude White (1903). A fortress near the border between Sikkim and Tibet, where the English expedition under Younghusband first met the abbot of Tashilunpo. *Below: Serving Ladies* by Ilya Tolstoy (1943), photographed on an American diplomatic mission to Tibet during the 19-day-long New Year's Festival.



In the meantime, I received my official credentials, almost three feet long and sealed with the large red seal of the Dalai Lama's regent.

To take official leave from the government, I could have attended either a regular daily morning tea ceremony at Norbu Lingkha, the Dalai Lama's summer palace, or a special religious ceremony, at which the Dalai Lama—then only 12 years old and still under the guardianship of the regent—presided and would give his personal blessings. The day I chose was a great Buddhist festival: Drukpa Tshezhi, the "Fourth Moon of the Sixth Month," commemorating the first setting in motion of the sacred Wheel of Law by Buddha in the deerpark at Sarnath, over 2,500 years ago. Early that morning I rode with my servant to Norbu Lingkha, a few miles west of Lhasa. At about eight in the morning the ceremony began in a large ceremonial hall, with all participants—about 500 monk officials, the regent, and the Dalai Lama—being served Tibetan tea and sweet rice. The Dalai Lama, seated on the Lion *(Continued on page 28)*



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(Continued from page 26) Throne, first received homage from the regent, who, prostrating himself thrice before him, offered the three symbols for body, speech, and mind: a sacred image, a book, and a small bronze *stupa*—a container for sacred objects—followed by a long white silk scarf. His Holiness blessed the regent by gently touching heads, then with his right hand blessed all the resident monk officials who lined up according to rank and seniority by touching them or passing his hand over them. Two huge monk bodyguards on either side of the line regulated the crowd movements to and from the throne. The Dalai Lama could not be approached directly; everyone who approached looped to the right so as to pass the Dalai Lama from the side. Next I and other officials leaving on different assignments offered our white scarves and were blessed. Before leaving the hall we all received a strip of silk with a knot in the middle, which had earlier been blessed by His Holiness.

My departure finally came on a warm, sunny day in early August. The short summer rains had ended and a gentle breeze was blowing. The sky over Lhasa was the clear sapphire blue so typical of the highlands of Tibet, fine traveling weather, indeed!

My entire family, with the exception of my father, gathered in the courtyard of our house, wearing festive brocade robes. Father remained alone in the shrine room on the top floor of the house, saying his prayers for my safe journey to India. When I entered to pay my respects and to ask for his blessings, he admonished me to make good use of my years abroad and to represent my country and His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, proudly.

My family and our retainers gave me an emotional farewell in the courtyard. Each one presented me with a white silk scarf. I mounted my favorite gelding, which had been saddled with its finest saddle cover as befitted the horse of a traveling monk official. As I bent down to tuck the folds of my clothes under one leg, my round fur- and brocade-trimmed hat slipped off my head and fell down. Normally a small matter, this incident was considered inauspicious on such an occasion, and I remember feeling instant apprehension. Was this *(Continued on page 30)*

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(Continued from page 28) a sign that I would never see Lhasa again?

One of our trusted servants, Jampa, over six feet tall and ruggedly handsome, wearing his silver *gau* (a small portable shrine containing a sacred Buddhist image), led our little caravan through the gate into the streets of Lhasa.

Our caravan slowly wound its way through the streets and past the towering wall of the Potala, seat of the government and residence of the Dalai Lama, into the countryside. About three miles beyond the city limits at the foot of a mountain, we stopped and rested for a few hours. In traditional Tibetan fashion my sisters and friends had preceded us to a garden to arrange for one last picnic with butter tea and cookies.

As we moved on, we passed below the sprawling monastic city of Drepung, my former monastery. Below Drepung lay the smaller monastic complex of Nechung, residence of Tibet's chief oracle, surrounded by green poplar and willow trees.

Nechung monks were known for their performing talent in sacred dances and folk operas. We had timed our arrival to coincide with the annual summer festival, when the monks were allowed to entertain lay people, families, and friends with performances of folk operas. A huge white tent appliquéd in blue with the eight auspicious symbols—the parasol, the two fish, the conch shell, the eternal knot, the banner of victory, the Wheel of Law, the lotus, and the wish-fulfilling vase—was set up in front of the main hall. The Nechung monks sat in rows on one side, flanked by elegantly dressed visitors from Lhasa and ordinary village folk in colorful costumes. During the day-long performance of the opera *Norsang*, which told the story of Prince Norsang and his Quest for His Beloved, we feasted on several fine meals served on the Tibetan-style individual, low, hand-carved tables.

The following day we continued our journey in a westerly direction, heading for the valley of the Tsang-chu, 40 miles from Lhasa. Our caravan of three servants, five horses, and five ponies slowly proceeded along the well-worn trade route, led by an ever-cheerful Jampa. The following day we passed the old castle *(Continued on page 32)*

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(Continued from page 30) of Chushul, perched on a knife-edge ridge 500 feet above us, and the slightly lower fort—both in ruins. Situated in a strategic spot overlooking the trade routes from India, Nepal, Bhutan, and Shigatse to Lhasa, Chushul was an important stronghold in earlier days.

The great mountains and lakes dotting the land had a special significance for, and influence over, the lives and destiny of our people, representing a "sacred geography." They were considered the abodes of gods and goddesses, and the names for the mountains and gods were the same. Mount Everest was known to Tibetans as Jomo Langmo and was considered the abode of the goddess of that name.

We had to cross the Tsang-chu, which becomes the mighty Brahmaputra in Assam and almost meets with the Ganges in the Bay of Bengal, and early in the afternoon reached the ferry crossing at Chakzam Drukha, where the river flows at an altitude of 12,000 feet. Although the swift waters are extremely treacherous, the river is navigable for long stretches. Traditional Tibetan boats called *coracles* ferried us across, but our horses and ponies had to swim alongside, held by their reins from inside the boat. This tricky operation was expertly handled by my servants and the boatmen, while I examined the coracles more closely. These primitive but extremely practical boats were constructed from several yak hides, sewn together and stretched over a frame. The strong currents always pull the craft downriver, so the boatmen had to carry their lightweight ferries back upstream before crossing again.

Tibetans were keen traders, an occupation that followed naturally from a nomadic heritage. We encountered large caravans of merchants and pilgrims, united for mutual protection against robber bands. Sometimes they recited the verses of Tibet's great hero epic, the *Kesar Ling*, as they traveled. Traders journeyed south to India carrying wool, salt, musk, borax, and gold and returned laden with tea, broadcloth, spices, and all sorts of manufactured goods. Often passing one another, we exchanged news and information.

The normal route would have us due south from *(Continued on page 37)*



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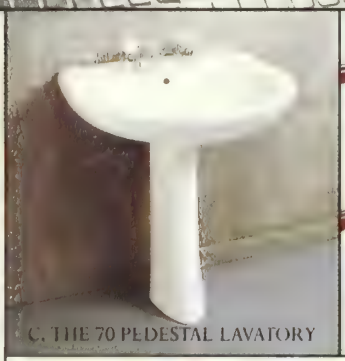
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(Continued from page 32) Gyantse toward the border, but I wanted to make a side trip to the provincial capital of Shigatse and the monastery of the Panchen Lama, Tashilhunpo.

The Panchen Lama, second only to the Dalai Lama in secular and religious importance, is also a reincarnation, discovered after the previous Panchen Lama's death in a manner similar to the search made for the Dalai Lama's successor. The present incarnation of the Panchen Lama, then only 10 years old, was away in eastern Tibet at the time. Still I desired to visit his monastery, one of the largest and richest in Tibet and, with its more than 4,000 monks, a town in itself. Having arrived at Shigatse, I followed crowds of pilgrims to Tashilhunpo, established in 1447, one-half mile beyond the city. The entire monastic complex comprised about 100 houses, tombs of the former Panchen Lamas, and several large temples housing religious treasures. Like other great monasteries in Tibet, Tashilhunpo employed its own artisans year round for the printing of woodblocks for books and manuscripts, painters for religious scroll paintings and murals, sculptors, stone-masons, metalworkers, tailors, and others. The main hall of one of the temples houses an impressive statue, many stories high, of Maitreya, the next Buddha. We had to retrace our steps to Gyantse before heading south on our final leg of our journey to the border.

Flocks of wild geese accompanied us part of the way south. Here and there we spotted wild sheep, mountain goats, antelopes, gazelles, and large herds of wild Tibetan asses called *kyangs*. Occasionally an eagle or hawk swooped down to catch a marmot or rodent. Much to my joy we also caught a glimpse of some shy musk deer grazing on a mountainside. The air was fresh and the sky was clear and pure as the waters of Yamdok Lake.

Once our caravan passed the trading center of Phari, we descended slowly into the lower, semitropical regions of the Chumbi Valley.

On a fine September day we finally crossed into the Kingdom of Sikkim across the 14,000-foot-high Natula Pass—descended through lush tropical forests to Kalimpong, the busy trading town and caravansery in northern Bengal. □



THE MASTER OF ALLUSION

Sir John Soane: "Summing up in hard clean lines, a misty and romantic past"

By Charles Moore

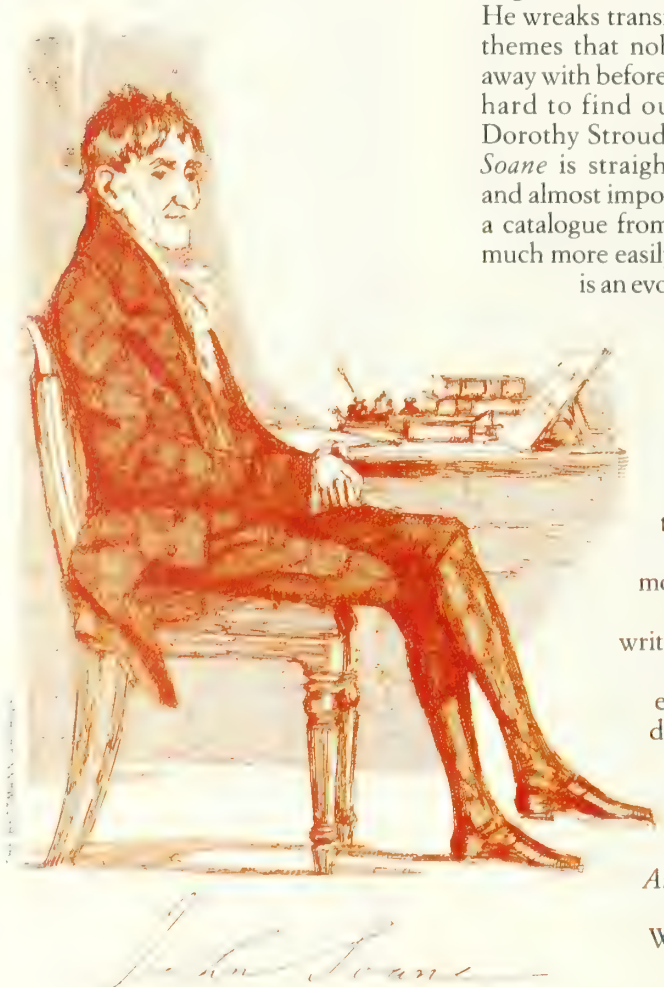
JOHN SOANE: THE MAKING OF AN ARCHITECT
Pierre de la Ruffinière du Prey, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1982.

The architect in all of history that I (and I think quite a few others, these days) feel the closest affinity to, and the most excitement about, is Sir John Soane. Soane lived his long life in London and bequeathed to England in the year of his death (which was the year of Victoria's accession to the throne) his house, which was his museum. The Soane Museum, at 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, is, as they say, a magpie's nest, laden with the detritus of a messed-up life, an incredibly fruitful and fascinating career, and one of the most driven and unstoppable collector's instincts of all time.

Soane came from what is for us a particularly fascinating time, at the turn of the 19th century, when the western world, at the height of the industrial revolution, in the midst of political revolution, was turning at once forward and back; artists and architects were (very sensibly, it now seems) turning directly to the classical past for inspiration, for sources to be transformed (really transformed, not just reused) to meet the challenges of a world in the throes of change. Soane's younger contemporary Karl Friedrich Schinkel was doing it in Berlin, with staggering energy and skill and verve. And his older contemporary in America, Thomas Jefferson, was advocating the architecture of the Greek and Roman republics as the only model suitable for the experiment in political democracy for which he was also the chief architect.

And here we are, in the midst of another dizzying advance, our powers vastly extended in an electronic revolution, trying to place ourselves. We are, to boot, the immediate inheritors of the modern movement in architecture, which seems to have thrown the historical baby out with the admittedly murky bath water. So it is no wonder that the generations of Schinkel, Soane, and Jefferson make fascinating models for us: They latched on to the past to get their bearings in the present, and the courage to plunge into the quickly changing future; and they seem, whatever their other problems, to have found a dazzling amount of joy in it.

Especially Soane. His works are eccentric, odd, crazy—though right on target, and often beautiful and movin He wreaks transformation on classic themes that nobody else has gotte away with before or since. But it is ve hard to find out much about hin Dorothy Stroud's picture book *Joh Soane* is straightforward, extensiv and almost impossible to find. There a catalogue from the Soane Museun much more easily available. And the is an evocative piece about th Soane Museum i Robert Harb son's *Eccentri Spaces* (Knop 1977). But S John Summerso who is the curator c the Soane Museu and maybe th most lucid, interestin and influentia writer about architectu in our time, has ne er turned his attentio directly toward Soane The announcemen then, of a ne book, *John Soan The Making of a Architect,* was for man of us a major even Written by Pierre de l Ruffinière d Prey, who got his Ph.D. Princeton, it promise sound scholarship and, o course, a fascinating subject. It ha both of those, maddeningly mis matched, as though the definitive biog raphy of Groucho Marx had bee written by St. Ignatius of Loyola. Th wondrous thing, I believe, about Joh Soane's work (much of which has bee destroyed, so the printed page has be come important testimony) is its *wi* its astringent (but never abrasive), lu natic, inventive, surprising, amazin delight in summoning up in hard, clea lines a misty and romantic past. It's rea Zen-archer *(Continued on page 40*



Winterthur

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Philadelphia Piecrust Tea Table. *Philadelphia, circa 1765. The Chippendale – style mahogany reproduction features a "birdcage" mechanism that joins the top to the shaft and allows the top to tilt and swivel. The original is displayed in the Blackwell Parlor.*





Philadelphia Easy Chair. *Philadelphia, circa 1750. This upholstered easy chair with hand-carved mahogany legs and "C" scroll arms is a faithful reproduction of the Philadelphia Queen Anne Style. The original is displayed in the Philadelphia Bedroom.*



Philadelphia Sofa. *Philadelphia, circa 1775. This Chippendale – style sofa with solid mahogany base and legs is masterfully hand-carved to duplicate the original sofa. The original attributed to John Linton was made for John Dickinson and is displayed in the Port Royal Parlor.*

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"Architects copy carefully for a long time before they are ready to transform their models into original works; Soane's originality would seem to justify a lot of copying"

(Continued from page 38) stuff, where a deft incision into a smooth plaster surface seems to reveal a whole rich world beyond. Or it's a fairy tale, aided with mirrors (nobody else has ever used mirrors with such skill) that open up dazzling but altogether implausible dimensions, through the looking glass or out the back of the wardrobe.

M. de la Ruffinière du Prey, on the other hand, is a scholar, painstaking, thorough, indefatigable. I would trust him just about always to be correct, and always to be precise about it. And his method, his device for being original is indeed ingenious and admirable: He came upon Soane's notebooks, ledgers really, hopelessly uninteresting for most of us, full of small bills paid to bricklayers, and similar heady stuff, and he reconstructed from them and from other more inaccessible sources that must have required prodigies of detectival scholarship a detailed account of Soane's career up to 1785, when he hired his first employee, thereby becoming "established" and swimming out of the focus of this book.

I was grateful, as I read the book, that M. de la Ruffinière du Prey had gone to all that hard work, and had discovered so much. But I was increasingly offended at what came at length to seem a prissily judgmental point of view, snobbish about Soane's lower-middle-class origins, downright nasty about his techniques for getting work, haughtily disapproving of "the specter of copied drawings." Our author seems caught in the grip of the 20th-century fetish demanding endless originality, and devoid of the understanding that architects copy, and copy carefully and for a long time, before they are ready to transform their models into marginally original works; Soane's subsequent originality would seem to justify a lot of copying. The author sports an unseemly phobia about guides and models and influences; even the guidebooks used by Soane and his confreres on the Grand Tour in Italy are seen as instruments of the devil. "Snide," I have written in the margin on page 171; "nasty," I have written often. "It is easy," it says on page 318, "to judge Soane harshly." Apparently. But at the expense of missing the point. On the penultimate page of the text, finally, the author writes: "In the final analysis, Soane's early career discloses the basic 'modernity of the 18th century'." Hooray. But wait; it goes on: "His career touches upon the foundation of our architectural profession with its uniform qualifications and standardized fees." No, no, no, M. de la Ruffinière du Prey, that's not the point.

But buy it; it is a book with exciting pictures and miracles of scholarship. And it's beautiful. Remember that before you fling it at the wall. □



Upper portion of the façade of Sir John Soane's house, now the Soane Museum, at 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields in London.

Charles Moore, one of America's leading architects, was recently awarded the commission to design the Beverly Hills Civic Center. The author of several books, his forthcoming works include The City Observed: Los Angeles *(Random House) and a book on gardens written with William Mitchell, to be published by Pantheon.*



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DOMESTIC DINOSAURS

In the first four decades of this century, England built a last generation of great houses doomed to economic extinction

By Dona Guimaraes





Top Kitchen at Manderston in Berwickshire (1901–05). *Above* Drying room at Hill of Travit, Fife, a chamber with a central stove to heat the air; "drying horses"—rails laden with clothes—were pushed in, pulled out.

THE LAST COUNTRY HOUSES
by Clive Aslet. Yale University Press, $29.95

One of the reading pleasures of my childhood were the dog-eared copies of English magazines that found their way into our Michigan home. They came via circuitous routes, but mostly from the Episcopal minister who was British and still kept up his subscriptions to *Punch* and *Country Life,* which he swapped with my mother for *The National Geographic* and *The New Yorker.*

Country Life was by far the most engrossing. It had squinty print and was full of grayish photographs of elaborate mansions, and villages with funny names like Upper Slaughter or Lower Swell. In the back were reader letters, recording anchor-trussed tithe barns or the moonlit antics of hedgehogs in hedgerows. The phrases and the places were all very different from Middle-Western America and sometimes I was forced to take a quick dip into *The Wind in the Willows,* which served as my Baedeker for the British countryside and the pages of *Country Life.*

The Wind in the Willows was published in 1908. *Country Life* was founded in 1897, and the ebullient Mr. Toad of Toad Hall, and the self-made millionaire in his new country establishment, have something in common. For it is the turn of the century that begins Clive Aslet's *The Last Country Houses* (Yale University Press, $29.95), a book recounting the final flourish of country house building that took place in England from 1890 to 1939.

It was the sunset era for British country houses. The Great War, and the sweeping economic and social changes of the period, ultimately finished off the breed. "Born late," as Mr. Aslet writes, "in the evolutionary chain, they were nevertheless great mammoths of *(Continued on page 44)*



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(*Continued from page 42*) domestic architecture, and were frequently unable to adapt to the change in habitat that followed the two world wars. Inflexible in their service arrangements, they grazed in a savannah of cheap labor and cheap fuel. They basked beneath a sky in which the filmy clouds of income tax and death duties had only just begun to appear."

But in 1908, the architect E. Guy Dawber noted, "Probably more country houses are being built and more money and thought expended on them, than perhaps at any time since the days of the Stuarts."

It was the Industrialists, with newly minted fortunes, who were expending money and thought, and they preferred the form rather than the reality of landed life. Often behemoth castles rose on very small properties, but since these were weekend rather than live-in houses, it was possibly preferable.

Some of the biscuit-barons wanted smart country houses with comfortable and elegant interiors, palaces for entertaining, and a hopeful move up the business, political, or social ladder. Others wanted more romantic houses, usually concocted from older buildings. English rural life and customs were fast disappearing and there were those who felt that living in an expensively restored Tudor farmhouse brought them closer to simple ways.

State-of-the-art technology was necessary for smart country houses like West Dean Park, in Sussex. The architects Ernest George and Peto remodeled the house in 1893 for the wealthy William Henry James (railroads). West Dean had an elaborate boiler room, telephones, a central vacuum cleaning system, and a motorcar-house. Edward VII, who liked a comfortable country weekend with an amusing and permissive hostess, was a frequent guest.

There was one change made at West Dean that had a far-reaching effect. At the center of the house, the architects created a central living-hall or lounge. Two stories high, it was furnished with groupings of comfortable chairs and sofas, a place for the houseparty to mingle and relax. Once the Edwardian living-hall had been established, it was the death of those masculine territories of billiards and gun rooms. The ease and informality that the lounge provided (and the advantage of mixed company) was much more amusing.

The quintessential romantic country house was Lindisfarne Castle, designed in 1902 by Edwin Lutyens for Edward Hudson (publishing). A fortress perched on an island, Lindisfarne was firmly in the William Morris Arts and Crafts tradition. All peasant simplicity, the rooms were sparsely decorated with polished wood furniture; printed linen curtains framed leaded glass windows. No motorcar-houses here. In fact, Lindisfarne was the summit of inconvenience. The house could only be reached by a climb over cobblestoned terraces and the island itself was completely cut off at high tides. Guests, notably Lytton Strachey and the Prince and Princess of Wales, found Lindisfarne cold and uncomfortable.

Mr. Aslet is currently senior architectural writer for *Country Life,* and presumably he has had access to the magazine's 85 years of unique house documentation. The material is superlative, and Mr. Aslet has used the magazine's black-and-white photographs (magically, no longer as gray as I remember), embellishing them with sections of color plates.

With a true voyeur's instinct I turned immediately to the section on service areas. It is no accident that these are grouped under the heading called "The Servant Problem." These rooms were as luxurious as the houses they served, dynamos with marble-faced instrument panels, laundry rooms whose racks rolled into coal-stoked drying chambers, huge sculleries with 20-foot scrubbed pine tables and bathrooms containing giant cage showers. "The bathroom became the most characteristic Art Deco contribution to the country house," says Mr. Aslet, and he has the material to prove it. The alabaster tub enclosure at Castle Drogo, which Lutyens completed in 1938 for Jullian Drewe (retailing), is of such splendor that any prince, merchant or otherwise, might be daunted.

The architecture of these last country houses was highly individualistic. Architects and clients alike swung into historic styles with dazzling gusto. An accommodating architect could have Scottish Baronial, Neo-Georgian, Neo-Wren, Olde English, or Lyric Tudor in his repertoire.

The stylistic effects of this last great period of country house building are still visible today. Study any British or American middle-class suburb built prior to 1950. There is that same eclectic mix expressed on a more modest scale.

The neighborhood in which I grew up was just one of those architectural mixes. Our house, turreted and half-timbered, I now define as a Debased Stockbroker Tudor, built for a *nouveau riche* manufacturer (glass), circa 1923. It had a large stained-glass window featuring an armoured knight on the landing, and our magazines were piled in an oak-paneled inglenook, which a previous owner had, to my mother's regret, painted cream color.

But change is inevitable, and most large houses outlive their usefulness as homes. The majority of the houses catalogued by Mr. Aslet are now torn down or hopelessly changed. Some have become schools or monasteries, others are furniture showrooms or have been turned into flats. Romantic Lindisfarne is still intact and owned by the British National Trust, but smart West Dean has become a crafts college. The house in which I pored over those absorbing copies of *Country Life* is now owned by the local funeral establishment.

The dates of Mr. Aslet's book, 1890–1939, were chosen to follow Mark Girouard's earlier work on the same genre, *The Victorian Country House,* published in 1972. Both are interweaves of social and architectural history, but Mr. Girouard tackles each of his houses separately, whereas Mr. Aslet groups his houses thematically. Both books record past glories, but with the advantages of the color plates in Mr. Aslet's book, those last British country houses really shine and glitter. The blazing white façade of Nashdom, the gaily-painted Arts and Crafts chapel at Madresfield, the trompe l'oeil Art Deco corridor at Monkton are all stunners. For anyone interested in British domestic architecture, there can be nothing better than to curl up in an inglenook and enjoy Mr. Aslet's excellent compendium. □

Dona Guimaraes is editor of The New York Times *Home Section and an inveterate country-house visitor.*

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BY JEANNE HOLGATE

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FRENCH WITHOUT FEARS

In the shop started by his father, Tony Victoria gives evidence of having inherited a collector's heart

By Nancy Richardson

In *The Pursuit of Love*, Nancy Mitford describes in fiction her own love for a magnetic, famously civilized Frenchman whose aristocratic instincts had led him for years to collect beautiful things as well as women. From this "duc de Sauveterre" the young Mitford learned lessons of love, the rituals of French chic, the appeal of houses and rooms that embodied the French passion for extraordinary surroundings. In the mornings she sunbathed in the enormous open windows of her apartment, in the afternoon bought hats, fitted dresses, and made the rounds of the antiquaires. She learned the appeal of a shop filled with a jumble of treasures seen under a soft light and a desirable layer of dust. In the same era and in a similar spirit, Frederick P. Victoria, an Italian born in London, had a shop in New York that attracted a Francophile set—Elsie de Wolfe, the Windsors, Grace Kelly, George Stacey, and the young Albert Hadley. They went to Victoria to experience the pleasures of discovery, poking through a collection of decorative and classic French furniture that derived its initial charm from not being pompously arranged. A collector at heart, Fred Victoria bubbled over with information and insights if someone made a knowledgeable comment. He loved what he called château furniture—country furniture made for big houses with the same high-style lines of court furniture but influenced by local materials and stylistic quirks. He had a passion for decorative porcelain—covered dishes in the shapes of vegetables or fruit. His eye for bits of boiserie—overdoors and trumeaux—that could be used as a sculptural element attracted decorators as did his taste in unusual chairs. He loved French clocks, which were valued for their look rather than their mechanism, and always wanted them ticking, though not necessarily on time. Upstairs at Victoria were craftsmen who could copy an old chair if you had one and wanted a pair, and there was a whole floor that was nothing more than a sea of dusty 18th- and 19th-century chairs.



Anthony Victoria loves French chairs

By the early 1970s the continuity of Frederick Victoria's business was established as his son Anthony joined it. Tony had grown up in the company of the French antiquaries who were Fred's friends, learning their habits, following them to the auction rooms, researching finds. But Tony had also gone to business school and was the age of a new younger client who often knew less than and had little of the leisure of the lover/collector of the Mitford novels. As the price of old furniture went up, Tony realized that important pieces would have to be shown in a less offhand way. The upper floors at Victoria were still set up for explorers, but last spring the first floor became a sophisticated series of well-arranged sitting rooms.



Accessories count as much as furniture

Fred Victoria had died by the time Tony bought the major pieces from the Elsie de Wolfe ballroom at the Villa Trianon when it went up for sale in Paris. Tony realized that what would be dismissed in France as decoration was just ornamental enough to be worth bringing back to America where its provenance would be appreciated. Parts of the ballroom went to a new barrel-vaulted gallery in Connecticut, others to California to a private collector and a Michael Taylor client who was building a spectacular greenhouse.

Today Tony continues buying the big-scale cabinets, secretaries, and commodes that they have always liked and that anchor any room. Like his father he also has a continuing fascination with 18th-century French chairs. "We never ceased to enjoy how the fluid line of a Louis XV chair was made to do the job of supporting a human body in various positions. The other irresistible thing about French chairs is their variety—there are children's chairs, chairs for praying, sitting backwards, combing your hair, napping, making love, even putting on stockings by the fire. When I see an unusual chair, not even a pair, the important thing is not the price, it's that I have it," he admits. These passionately acquired chairs have become the Victoria trademark at the Winter Antiques Show in New York.

Tony Victoria is as equally tantalized by some 19th-century furniture as he is by his own special brand of the 18th century. "I like the 19th-century things that still preserve the thread of the 18th—colorful trompe l'oeil porcelain by Jacob Petit, *(Continued on page 48)*



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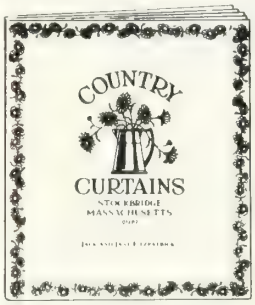
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A 19th-c. cabinet sets off porcelain treasures at Victoria.

(Continued from page 46) fanciful Charles X accessories, cabbage tureens, even English Regency sleigh chairs inlaid in brass, Russian Neoclassical beds and bookcases. I love good quality, but I can never buy something unless it's also decorative. If it's rare, too, then it's just going to be more expensive fun."

The decorative accessories in particular—witty, unexpected finds—have always set the mood at Victoria. Fred liked a perfect Chelsea apple as well as one that had been glued back together. He often offered the two for sale side by side—one for a collector, the other for the young with an eye but no money. Just behind the glass front door of the shop Fred Victoria always kept a vitrine filled with a collection of small plump porcelain treasures of this sort—tiny all-white St. Cloud cachepots, tops of small tureens done like a cluster of brilliant fruit and vegetables, chinoiserie figures. These things represented compulsion and amusement for Fred Victoria. What made them an important feature of the shop was the way they were packed into one cabinet. Fred's arrangement immediately suggested their decorative potential and his clients bought not one but six things to transfer to dressing tables and sitting-room tabletops as straightforward delight for the eye. Tony Victoria will still give an entire morning to an auction in the hope of buying a pair of charming 18th-century miniatures. They will both emphasize the major lesson to be learned at Victoria—it takes more than important classic furniture to make a room sing. □



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LUMINOUS LUXURY

A spectacular New York penthouse remodeled by architects
Richard Weinstein and Wayne Berg and decorated by Mica Ertegun of Mac II

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JACQUES DIRAND







Preceding pages: The central stairway of the apartment is a glass-brick cylinder that brings a luminous shaft of light into the heart of the spacious duplex. *Above:* The living room, a large two-story space with panoramic views of the East River. *Right:* View down from the living-room balcony. *Following pages:* The living room's dominant treasure: a magnificent three-panel Moorfields carpet designed by Robert Adam, circa 1770.

The New York penthouse often presents a paradox: although it symbolizes, quite literally, the height of luxury, it often lacks the one luxury people most prize in a home—space. This is especially true in the upper reaches of some of Manhattan's most distinguished older apartment buildings, where the frequently fanciful tops of towers are sometimes far less spacious than apartments on lower floors. That was the case with a duplex in one of the East Side's most famous cooperatives, and the reason why its new owners called on architects Richard Weinstein and Wayne Berg to undertake a sweeping reworking of the existing spaces, which were surprisingly ungenerous given the large overall size of the apartment.

One major consideration was the clients' wish to have a home that could accommodate large-scale entertaining, but also provide a feeling of intimacy both for their guests and for themselves when alone. Remarkably, the architects achieved those two seemingly mutually exclusive requirements, creating a setting at once grand and inviting. Above all, they have provided a framework that allows a human scale to be found within the undeniable drama of this quintessential Manhattan tower. *(Continued on page 62)*









The living room balcony (also seen on pages 56–57) can be closed off from the larger space by means of pivoting glass panels, here shown in their open position.



Right: The stairway leads from the entry hall on the first floor of the apartment to the bedroom floor above.
Above: The master bedroom, at right rear, is adjoined by a peripheral corridor that forms a continuous suite of bathrooms, dressing rooms, and clothing storage for the owners. The glass-block enclosure at left contains a bathroom and a sauna.
Following pages: The master bedroom is given an almost architectural focus by the freestanding canopy bed and its extravagant lace hangings.

Richard Weinstein and Wayne Berg accomplished two of the most desirable goals of architecture in their remodeling of this apartment: simplification and unification. They took the apartment's largest area—the 19-by-41-foot living room—and stripped away the dropped, vaulted ceiling that diminished its true double-story height, opening the impressive space to a lofty 24 feet. A second story of windows formerly obscured by the old ceiling was thereby revealed and now forms a new clerestory that floods the south-and-east-facing room with light. To help mediate the awesome new ceiling height, the architects built a shallow balcony at the 12-foot level that extends around all four sides of the room and connects with the private family quarters on the second floor.

The proportions of the living room are more or less those of a double cube, one of the most beloved spatial ratios of Palladian architecture, which seems especially appropriate in light of the living room's most splendid decorative feature: a large rug designed by the Neoclassical architect Robert Adam around 1770. Although made for Ingestre Hall, the rug fits its new space so perfectly that it is hard to believe it is not actually some kind of telepathically posthumous creation. The twin of an Adam carpet now at Syon House, it is composed of three characteristic Adam panels that the apartment's decorator, Mica Ertegun of Mac II, wisely used as the organizational bases of the room's major seating areas. Together with ample window seats, the scheme provides several easy gathering places where guests can come together and talk, and gives a very personal emphasis to a room that otherwise could have been overwhelmingly intimidating. The graceful mixture of contemporary upholstered seating, fine antique furniture, and subdued colors gives the living room an air that is both modern without the hard edges as well as traditional without the stuffiness.

The second floor of the apartment had been a veritable warren of small servant's rooms, which were combined to give the owners a master bedroom suite that in effect meanders around three different exposures. The entry to their bedroom, in fact, is marked by a four-columned aedicula under which one can stand and see out windows in all four directions of the compass. For all its extraordinary aspects—its location, its size, and its views—it is, however, a thoroughly livable apartment, and one in which architectural gimmickry was never indulged at the expense of function. That is what this design is about, for even when money is no object, the object is still to have a house that works, both beautifully and well. □ *By Martin Filler*











VICTORIAN SEASONING

Mark Hampton decorates a landmark house by the sea for a young city couple and their children to enjoy year round

BY MARY SEEHAFER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER VITALE

City dwellers, they were renting nearby for the summer when they heard the Victorian house they'd always admired was finally for sale. It had just the qualities they were looking for: the water view the area is famous for, and plenty of land for their four children to roam, in this case bordered by wildlife sanctuaries that make the property seem to stretch on forever. They bought the house without a moment's hesitation. "It was instantaneous falling in love," they recall.

Their initial efforts went toward restoring the seriously sagging veranda—replacing the latticework, reproducing the tongue-and-groove flooring without using a single nail, and with the old posts as templets, duplicating the rotting colonnade little by little, as rare 12-foot timbers arrived at the town lumberyard.

Indoors, the finely proportioned rooms with ceilings of "just the right height" seemed to *(Continued on page 69)*







Opposite: From the flowered living room, French doors open to the brick-bordered pool. In the distance, the freshwater pond, where the children fish for perch in summer, skate in winter. Wicker chairs are often moved outdoors during parties. *Left and preceding pages:* For a better view, the veranda's surrounding hedge was removed, revealing the skeletal beauty of the restored colonnade. The expansive front lawn is often the site for impromptu family soccer. *Below left:* The "cork room," so named for its fool-the-eye wallpaper. Window is left uncurtained for enjoying the boxwood garden outside.

embrace their family life naturally. "This was the first summer house built in the area, and you can tell it was built for a family," say the owners. "There's an ease to the size of the rooms—they're not strange or off-center or grandiose like some Victorians. The gingerbread ornamentation outside gives a warm, inviting first impression, and the age of the house, its permanence, is reassuring to us."

The decorating evolved under the direction of Mark Hampton. "With children of his own, Mark understands family life," say the owners. "The first time he came over, he took it all in in a glance—the children, the friends, the constant activity—and summed up just what we wanted." Says Hampton, "It was important to reflect the life that actually goes on here, with a look that says, 'We *live* here, we're not just visiting.' It's a look that can't be ruined by a sneaker left in the hall—which often as not is the case!"

Furniture was gathered from here and there—treasures from local and city antiques shops mixed with old family pieces "refinished, fluffed up, restuffed" for their new surroundings. "The fun of shopping for this house," recalls Hampton, "was *(Continued on page 74)*





In the family living room, practical chintz and an indestructible straw rug are the major elements—even the scarred top of the game table has been rejuvenated with chintz. Hampton says chairs are meant to be seen "in the round," as beautiful from the back as from the front. Large windows were added sometime after the house was built, to broaden the views. Watercolors and etchings are a casual collection of seaside and country idylls. Spicing up the mix of upholstered pieces are a charming wicker bench, a black Regency tray table, and a Gothic sag-seat stool.



In the library, tufted English Victorian chairs still have their original mohair upholstery. In the same mood and the same period as the house, a Victorian iron table with inlaid top by the fire, and a marble-top table in the corner. On the wall, exotic Robert Thornton botanical prints. Mantel with trompe l'oeil marble finish holds a matching pair of tortoise-finished English flower stands and a creamware pitcher.







that we always found something—even when we weren't looking! We chose pieces with the same general spirit as the house without being rigid about period or style. 'If it looks right, it is right!' was our motto." Colors mix without matching—"they're prettier that way, like flowers in a garden," Hampton explains— "and they'll still look just as good 10 years from now."

Practicality lurks under every pretty treatment. The veranda furniture is minimal, so it can be cleared away quickly when a storm comes up. The "cork room" is decorated like a porch as an adjunct to the pool outside, variously serving as a shelter from the sun and as a game room for the children. Tables are often set up here when large parties spill over from the dining room across the hall. Since the dining room doesn't receive much sun, its cool feeling is intensified by walls of pale blue.

A particularly favorite spot for the family is the wide old veranda out front, which overlooks the pond with a view of the ocean in the distance. "We read the morning papers here," says the man of the house, "have cocktails in the afternoon accompanied by the sound of the wild geese in the background, and we've witnessed some spectacular full moons hanging over the pond at night." Adds his wife: "Victorian houses have gotten the best of us—we've just bought a 19th-century brownstone in the city!" □

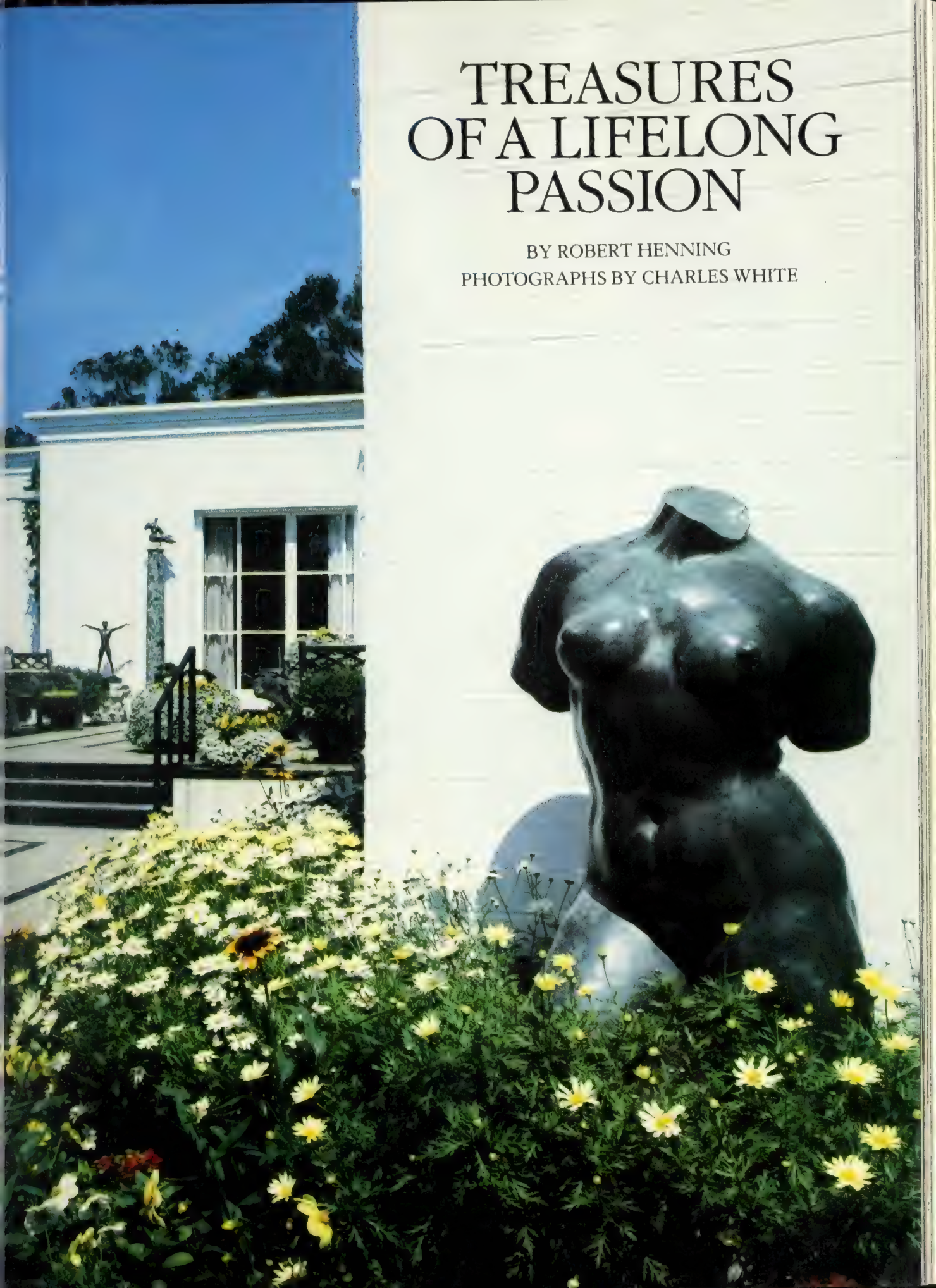
Opposite: In the master bedroom, the scorched bamboo of the Victorian desk is repeated by wallpaper borders, reflected in the bureau mirror. *Above left:* English bamboo settee is one of a pair in the living room. Extravagant wicker rocker, c. 1850, casts a lacy shadow. *Left:* Faux-bois dining table is circled by antiqued French country chairs. Instead of fighting the cool light, pale blue walls play it up. In the Arts-and-Crafts–style mantel are Staffordshire teacups.





TREASURES OF A LIFELONG PASSION

BY ROBERT HENNING
PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHARLES WHITE



The house presents a private face. Outside only a few fragments of Classical sculpture hint at the personality of its owner and the wonderful things to be found within. In concept and appearance—the flat roof and plain façade relieved only by a simple cornice—it owes something to vernacular Mediterranean architecture, which is appropriate for its Southern California setting. This house, the latest of three that Wright Saltus Ludington has created, is in many ways the distillation of a lifetime as artist, collector, and something more for which there is no one word in the language—a person with an intuitive understanding of natural and man-made beauty and the way they relate to each other.

After many years in larger houses with elaborate gardens, he wanted a small house, white, and turned so that it faced the sun. The result is "October Hill," which looks out from the ridge of a hill in Montecito, California, at a vista of sea and sky. The house evolved from the close collaboration of architect Lutah Maria Riggs, her assistant Joseph Knowles Jr., and Mr. Ludington, who was completely involved in the design from the day in 1973 when he first brought the architect his own sketches for the general design and the layout of the rooms. From that point the design evolved gradually and collaboratively—even during the period of construction—as each detail to be added to the basic form was carefully worked out. The downspouts, or *canales,* which were inspired by Mexican prototypes, required several full-scale models before the right form was achieved. Fabricated of reinforced concrete, colored permanently with marble dust, they add an unobtrusive but lively design element to the plain white exterior.

The rooms are grouped around a terrace that runs east and west on the south side of the house, and their changing levels and profiles seem to echo the contours of the landscape as though the house had gradually adapted to its site. The terrace takes full advantage of the natural setting and makes a transition between house and garden, garden and hillside, with its informal plantings of lavender, magnolias, boxwood, and evergreens. Geometric wall forms and tall square columns of painted cement block both focus and contain the view. The columns were the owner's ingenious solution to a difficult design problem and have proved so successful that they have grown from an initial few to the present clusters at both ends of the terrace. Black-painted bricks provide a linear contrast to the pebble surface of the terrace and form part of a whole series of black and white textures.

High ceilings, dark marble floors, and carefully placed French doors keep the house cool despite the full southern exposure, and the rooms are enlivened through the day by a continually changing play of light and shadow. At night the house and the collections are lit unobtrusively but to great effect from concealed sources.

It is a small, introspective, and highly personal house, restrained in materials, colors and design, with a few multipurpose rooms for the owner, a guest suite, and servant's quarters. It is in the tradition of the Renaissance *studiola* of that renowned collector, Isabella d'Este: a setting for the owner's collections, a place for quiet reflection, reading, and the enjoyment of the visual delights it houses. *(Continued on page 85)*



Preceding pages: The terrace looking west toward the dining room and guest room. Foreground torso by Maillol. *Right:* Three terra-cotta Tanagra figurines, small cycladic figures, a rare Roman ivory torso, and Roman glass vials surround Sumerian black basalt heads of King Gudea (c. 2200 B.C.) and a priest. *Overleaf:* A pair of Rouaults—*Clown and Child, Wrestler*—hang over Provençal chests in the living room. Walls are individually sanded cedar planks painted successively with white and green, rubbed with red glaze and umber. Corinthian capitals serve as tables.







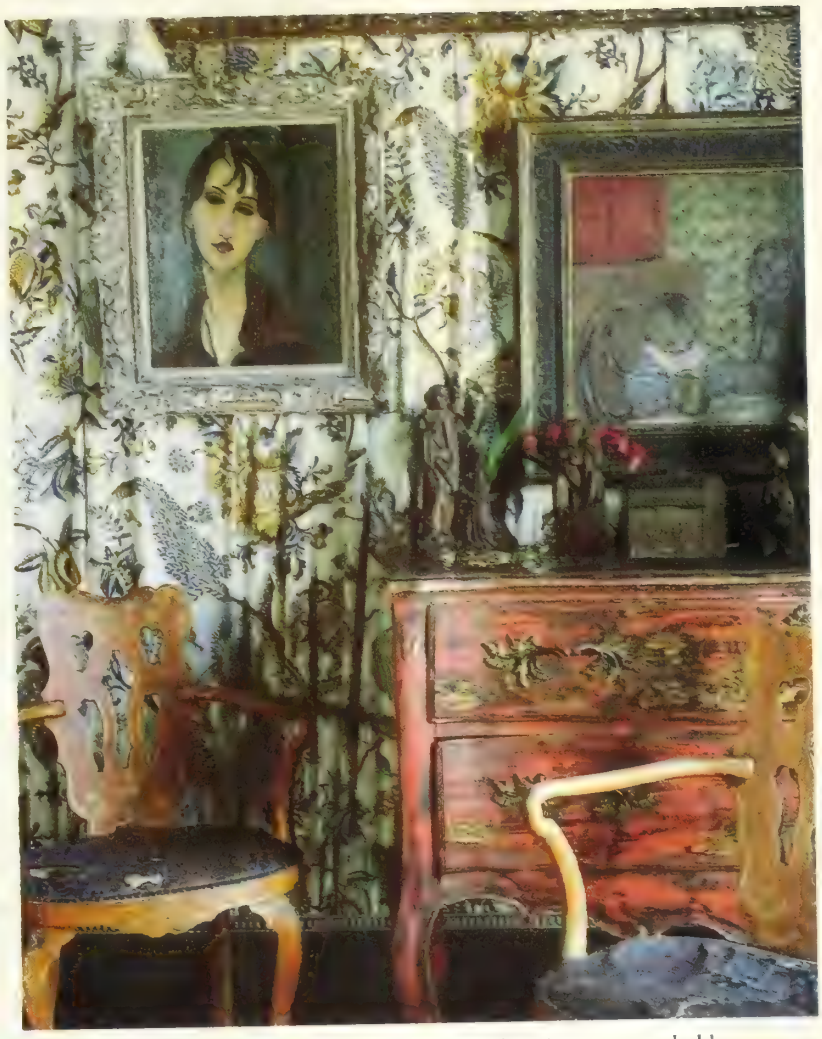


Terrace looking east, with a Roman column at the end of the pebble-and-black-brick paving between a narrow pool and the arbor and flower beds.









Left: In the living room, an 18th-century Venetian secretary holds Luristan bronzes and Roman terra-cotta figurines. Eighteenth-century lacquered chair is Portuguese, chest is English. On the walls, a Dunoyer de Segonzac still life and Rousseau's *Castle by Moonlight. Above:* A Modigliani portrait and Vuillard's *Interior with Baby* hang over Italian chairs and a Portuguese painted chest.

Mr. Ludington's interests encompass a great span of history, the art and artifacts of many cultures. He has traveled extensively for the purpose, as he has put it, "of learning what happened in this world creatively over the years; how one thing led to another." Many of his acquisitions have come about directly as a result of his study of a certain period or civilization. Each assemblage or group of objects suggests a network of associations and relationships drawn from the owner's experience that is both provocative and stimulating. Each strikes a different but harmonious resonance in the way it is composed. There is a certain unconventional but instinctive ease in the placement of things that has come from a lifetime of living with art and a deep understanding of "the way one thing led to another."

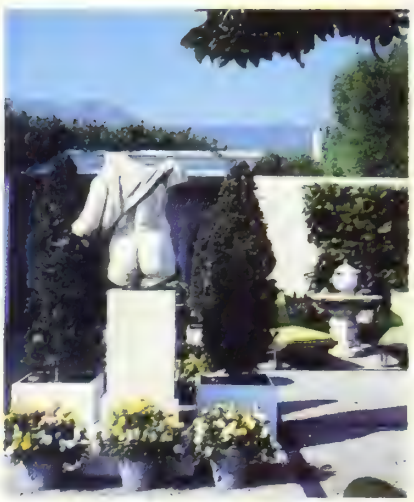
Wright Ludington began to buy art as a young man in his 20s, after brief periods of study at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the Art Students League, and Yale University. With some knowledge of art, stage design, and architecture, and an inheritance left by his mother (herself a collector of the Impressionists), he began as he has continued with many areas of interest. His first acquisition was a small portrait head by Derain from 1922, which he still owns. He was naturally drawn to those European painters who were making their mark as artistic innovators and soon acquired paintings and drawings by artists of *(Continued on page 90)*

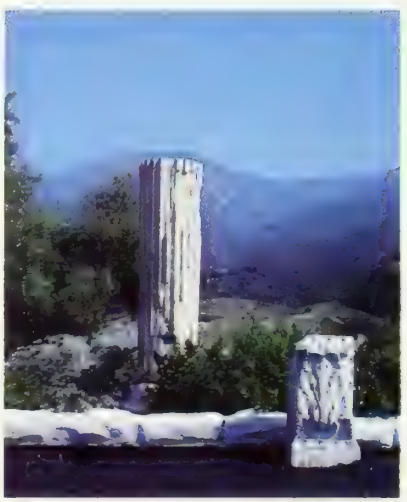












Opposite page: Still life on an 18th-century Portuguese desk includes a late medieval Madonna and Child from the same country, a South American ivory head of Christ, a French 18th-century mechanical toy, carved bone sailing ships, and a human skull encrusted with turquoise and gold from the Mixtec culture. *Above, clockwise from top left:* An archer by the turn-of-the-century French sculptor Bourdelle. Roman sculptures of Hermes and Aphrodite. Arno Breker's bronze swimmer poised to dive. Roman column and an acanthus-leaf bracket near the entrance drive. A torso of Hercules on the terrace. A mold-like bronze by sculptor Robert Cremean. *Overleaf:* In the bedroom-study a Portuguese mirror hangs over an Italian Baroque console that was probably made for a stage set. In the far corner, a wooden torso by Zadkine and dried yucca stalks. On a covered loggia off the terrace, the more-than-life-size Hermes found near Hadrian's villa at Tivoli was once part of the celebrated collection of Lansdowne House.









the Paris School. Important modern paintings by Picasso, Braque, Bonnard, Vuillard, and many others were acquired in many instances before the artists had achieved their present international fame. At the same time he was buying these contemporary artists, he also began to acquire examples of Classical sculpture, a taste more in keeping with the mature connoisseur than a beginning collector. With study, good advice, and a sure instinct, he formed a collection of exceptional quality that could not now be duplicated. Classical works still form a large proportion of his collection, although he has donated a great many to the Santa Barbara Museum of Art.

Encouraged by Alfred Stieglitz, a pioneering New York dealer in modern art, Mr. Ludington began buying important works by American modernists—Stuart Davis, Arthur Dove, Joseph Stella, Marsden Hartley, and Charles Demuth, and he came to know personally artists such as Georgia O'Keeffe and Gaston Lachaise. He is probably the only American to collect English Modernists in depth at a time when Graham Sutherland (a friend), Paul Nash, Wyndham Lewis, and John Piper were quite unknown in this country. At the same time, he enjoys the evocative qualities of works by anonymous craftsmen of the past—those capitals, columns, and fragments that form part of the *mise en scène.* And he has given encouragement to many young local artists through the years by purchasing of their work.

The highest tribute to his career as a collector comes from a dealer and friend of many years who describes Mr. Ludington as "the one collector I know who buys art without advisors and solely because he loves it."

The resulting collection is similar in many ways to those of the 18th-century English gentleman *amateurs* whom he admires, and like them, Mr. Ludington has created a setting of house, garden, sculpture, and paintings that is a harmonious whole. □

Robert Henning is Curator of Collections at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, and recently assembled an exhibition of gifts by Wright S. Ludington to that museum. His field of interest is prints and drawings.

Opposite: An 18th-century English bed with a variety of embroidered hangings dominates the book-lined bedroom. The rug is French needlepoint. A painted Venetian door leads to the living room. *Above:* Germaine Richier's *La Feuille* and a voluptuous Maillol nude stand among white columns on the lavender-covered hillside overlooking the sea.





BRIDGE BETWEEN EARTH & SKY

PHOTOGRAPHS BY OTTO BAITZ

A dramatic lakeside vacation house in Canada designed by architect Jim Strasman is a surprising new variation on one of the most familiar themes of the Modern Movement: the glass box



Although Toronto architect Jim Strasman was the designer of the Wandich house, a recently completed vacation retreat in Ontario, his striking scheme was largely inspired by specific buildings of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Philip Johnson, George Howe, and Craig Ellwood. At a time when the glass boxes of modern architecture are in particularly low repute, Strasman has embraced that famous form with a fervor that might seem to the Post Modernists to be almost maniacally anachronistic. He shows considerable bravery in using concepts that accord with his architectural intentions and the character of the setting, regardless of current popularity—or lack of it.

The Wandich house is built on a rocky peninsula overlooking Stony Lake, about 50 miles northeast of Toronto. The site is absolutely spectacular—a broad sweep of water and sky virtually guaranteed to make a house into an architectural "statement." Obviously, taking the greatest possible advantage of the breathtaking surroundings was a major consideration in the minds of both the architect and his clients, who have two children. The question of how to design a house that would promote that feeling of contact with the outdoors without destroying the site or the view led Strasman to the glass-box solution.

At one time, the glass box was a symbol of technological bravura, demonstrating the extraordinary capabilities of modern materials and engineering. In 1934, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe did a project sketch for a house remarkably similar to the Wandich scheme: a glass-and-steel pavilion suspended like a bridge over a canyon. Mies's famous Farnsworth house of 1946–50 (which was designed before, but built after, Philip Johnson's even more celebrated Glass House of 1949–50) was more earthbound than the bridge building, an idea that was finally realized in 1976 by Craig Ellwood in his Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, which spans a road. And one of George Howe's best-known houses, Fortune Rock of 1937–39 on the Maine Coast, has a boldly cantilevered balcony overlooking the water, a device that the west-facing deck of the Wandich house also echoes.



View from the dining area of the owners' pavilion looking east toward the smaller guest wing across the deck.



But as people who have lived in them know, glass houses can eventually become somewhat of a strain, both physically and psychologically. Privacy and the feeling of enclosure that are important human architectural needs aren't compatible with a life lived entirely behind huge sheets of plate glass; Philip Johnson's brick guest house adjacent to his fabulous vitrine is an acknowledgement of that fact. Accordingly, Jim Strasman placed the most private spaces of the house—the bedrooms and bathrooms—in the two rampart-like buildings that support the 172-foot-long superstructure. Constructed from stone excavated on the site, the two foundation buildings were conceived as the owners' quarters and a guest wing respectively. Both form a striking contrast to the sleek, architectural showmanship overhead. The cumulative effect is like opening an architectural history book and flipping directly from the prehistoric Aegean to the International Style.

Actually, the house works remarkably well in its clear division of function. The upper part is composed of two glass pavilions linked by an open arcade that continues the framing pattern of the window walls. One wing is linked to the owners' bedroom structure below, and contains a living room, kitchen, and dining room, while the smaller guest pavilion at the opposite end of the bridge has a kitchenette, sitting area, and dining area. The ample deck between the two glass-enclosed portions is used for entertaining, as is the west-facing terrace of the larger pavilion, from which the Wandiches like to watch the sunset.

Like the most successful vacation-house designs, the Wandich house requires little in the way of continuous maintenance, for the simple reason that there is relatively little, given its minimalist aesthetic, to maintain. In embracing that aesthetic, it draws on architectural history as much as the work of Michael Graves or Charles Moore, even though to some that more recent history seems hardly written. Nevertheless, the Wandich house's strong departure from current trends raises the question of whether in time it will be seen as the end of a modern tradition or yet another continuation of it. □ *By Martin Filler*



At the far west end of the owners' pavilion, a built-in seating island combines sofas, bookcases, and tables in one unit.







his page: West-facing deck of the owners' wing boldly cantilevered over the craggy, rampart-like structure at houses the bedrooms and bathrooms.
eft: Behind ground-level window wall, stairway ads from bedroom building up to living-ning pavilion. Stone paving continues indoors om terrace. Le Corbusier's famous chaise longue lds an appropriately modernist note.



Norman Mailer goes to the Egypt of Ramses IX for this excerpt from his latest novel, Ancient Evenings



A ROOM IN THE MIND'S EYE

BY
NORMAN MAILER

When we came to a stop and she set me down, I thought for a moment I had died—we were standing in a room so beautiful I did not know at first if we were in a house, a garden, or a pond.

Trees surrounded me. They were painted on every wall. I stood upon a watery marsh-grass floor, a golden marsh grass, and painted fish were swimming between the painted blades of grass. Above, stars were shining out of a painted evening sky, and in the red light of the western wall, the sun was setting, even as it had set last night to the west of my great-grandfather's roof, only now the view was of the Pyramids, and they were red as the meat of the pomegranate in this light, sitting on the

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painted plain of Jizeh between two of the four golden trees that held up the corners of this room. Doves and butterflies hovered in the steaming air, lapwings and green siskins flew in and out of the horns of oxen in the swamp reeds on the wall, water-lilies bloomed beneath my feet, and blue lotus almost concealed the rat who was stealing eggs from a crocodile's nest. In the midst of my weeping I began to laugh at the expression on the crocodile's face.

Now my mother put an arm around my waist and asked me to look at her, but I was staring at the ivory leg of the couch on which she sat. It was like the limb and hoof of an ox, or would have been if the hoof did not rest upon the polished floor instead of sinking into it, although as I continued to stare, the glaze was so high on the painted water that I could see my own reflection and my mother's, which gave, therefore, the look of light on water after all.

We stood among all the birds and animals who lived in the paint and I could even see flies and scorpions placed by the artist in the roots of the grass through which the fish were swimming. I smiled finally at my mother.

"I'm ready to go back," I said.

She looked at me, and asked, "Do you like this room?"

I nodded.

"It is my favorite room," she said. "I used to play here when I was a child."

"I think I would like to play here," I said.

"In this room I learned that I was supposed to marry the Pharaoh."

I could see my mother on a throne beside Ptah-nem-hotep and they were both wearing blue wigs. A boy with a face different from mine played between them.

"If you had married Him," I said, "I wouldn't be here."

My mother's deep black eyes stared for a long while into my eyes. "You would still be my son," she said. Now she put me on her thigh and I felt myself sink very slowly into the flesh of her lap, a tender settling that did not seem to stop even when her flesh gave way no more; the reverberation of this delicious sensation went out like the last remembrance of evening in the night and now I lived with bliss to equal the desolation I had known while staring into the face of the dog. How I loved the red light of the Pyramids as they reflected on the marsh-green polish of the floor. □

Preceding pages, left: Cobras astride the top of a leg of a queen's chair, from a wall painting of about 1380 B.C.; *right:* A kingfisher dives for prey in a papyrus swamp, from a mural in the north palace of Akhetaton at Tell el Amarna. *Opposite:* A cat with a silver earring under a chair, about 1275 B.C., Tomb of Ipuy, Deir el Median.







CHEZ JACQUES GRANGE

BY ALICE GORDON

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN RADKAI

French interior decorator Jacques Grange is a young 20th-century man living in a 17th-century Paris apartment with a distinctly 19th-century flavor. He is also an admitted romantic. He embraces his country's rich history, and has brought much of it alive in his own home. Everything about the apartment has a story that begs to be told, beginning with the apartment itself—the first floor of which was once home to the swashbuckling D'Artagnan and scene of his rendezvous with the beautiful Madame Bonacieux.

Jacques himself first saw the apartment, which is on an easy-to-miss street near the Church of St. Sulpice, when he was 15 and just beginning his education in the art of interior decoration at the Ecole Boulle. He entered the building through the street door, across the typical Parisian cobblestoned courtyard, up the narrow, winding stairway to the very top of the building, which was then a painter's studio. Added to the building in 1925, the studio had an artist's secluded view of myriad Paris rooftops. Jacques's first impression at his impressionable age was that he wanted to live there himself one day.



Above: Grange in his studio. *Opposite:* New window in winter bedroom was cut to frame St. Sulpice. *Top:* In summer bedroom, Neoclassical busts top gun pedestals that open for ammunition storage. Bronze horse on console is by Franz von Stuck.

Eight years later, Jacques had finished college at Paris's college of interior design, Ecole Camondo, begun his apprenticeship with an established decorator, and moved into the apartment he had set his heart upon. Two years more, and he had charmed the elderly lady in the apartment below into selling him her place. And 14 years after that, Jacques Grange has created a home that is cozily, comfortably, and unmistakably his very own. An expedition through Jacques Granges's apartment is a delightful, unintimidating survey of *(Continued on page 114)*









Preceding pages: Grange's library/dining room is an homage to the domestic atmospheres of Vuillard, with typically 19th-century Turkish carpets covering the furniture. Photograph-laden mahogany screen belonged to a 19th-century British horse-racing club. *Above:* The winter bedroom, with its screen by Bonnard, night table by Ruhlmann, trompe l'oeil velvet mushroom stool. *Overleaf:* Grange's table is set for lunch with flea-market green goblets, Art Deco Lalique carafes, Bayreuth commemorative plates, a sculpture by the Greek artist Takis, who currently works in Paris.



A room fashioned after a
Vuillard painting
shelters a Bonnard screen;
that screen depicts
the Luxembourg Gardens;
those gardens are in
reality a few steps away—
the imagination, luck,
and artistry of a man
with affection for
his history and belongings




TANNHÄUSER



A vision for the summer bedroom—painting the room to look like the stone walls of George Sand's house; leaving a Directoire iron bed undraped to display its sculptural beauty







Above: The summer bedroom, on the cooler lower floor, is furnished with a table that was once Chateaubriand's, early 19th-century Russian screens of black wood and copper, Art Deco *neo-grec* chairs, Directoire iron bed. *Opposite top:* Guest room has an added bath area, with granite tub against which is propped an Egyptian temple engraving; floor is cement mixed with rose paint; bed is Empire. *Opposite below:* Pink flamingo ceramic mural in master bath was in a turn-of-the-century Paris bistro. Sink was first a stove.



Opposite: Another view of winter bedroom, with original fabric by Raoul Dufy, table by Polti, chair by Hoffman. *Above:* Grange's studio, which he calls "Art Deco Colonial." Beige leather sofa by Pierre Chareau, stools by Jean Michel Frank used as cocktail tables, door handle by Ruhlmann.

centuries of artistic and decorative history—and a lesson in truly fearless and good-natured decorating. Generally 19th century, it is sparked with oddities from Louis XVI to Art Deco; pieces found over 14 years at favorite Parisian haunts—shops in St. Germain des Pres, the Marché aux Puces—and occasional sojourns in London.

From the beginning, Jacques—who now has his own business in Paris and is represented in New York by Didier Aaron, Inc.—decided his apartment asked for the cozy domesticity of a Vuillard painting. The library/dining room has become a space whose textures, colors, patterns, and details for contemplation would have had Vuillard himself poised with brush in hand: watercolor interior renderings sharing a terra-cotta mantelpiece with red candle screens painted by an unknown cubist; Bavarian "corn dollies" for good luck on either side of the fireplace; a neo-Gothic lamp on a Biedermeier table; chairs and sofa and floor covered with thick Turkish and Kashmir carpets; and before it all, tea laid out with a simple flea-market tea set.

The upstairs "winter bedroom" has the same secure feeling: Kashmir and Egyptian carpets, a "table de malade" put to healthy use; photographs of preeminent artistic figures of the 19th century, taken by seminal photographers—Courbet and Bernhardt by Nadar, Baudelaire by Carjat, Hugo, Verlaine—alongside engravings of exotic places like the Taj Majal; a Goya engraving near a fake Picasso whose real counterpart is in the Hermitage.

Jacques's playful juxtapositions also go farther back in history, to realize his vision for the "summer bedroom"—dusty-looking furniture, including flower chairs made for a *winter* garden; walls painted after the stone ones in Nohant, George Sand's country house.

The guest room is "a modern concept with a Neoclassical atmosphere"—with its granite bathtub on a platform above the splendid Empire bed; and then there is the studio and living room, where Jacques sometimes works, sometimes entertains, always has that view of Paris rooftops, along with his Art Deco piano, neo-Egyptian Liberty stool, American Arts and Crafts rocking chair.

Obviously Jacques Grange knows that the true character of "home" unfolds slowly, and that achieving it means using patience, optimism, and trust—letting your instincts lead you to the things that belong to you and letting affection put them all together. □



CITY TEXTURES

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER VITALE



For a high-in-the-sky apartment overlooking Manhattan, Bob Patino and Vicente Wolf pull the skyline into their decorating

With their children grown, this couple treated themselves to a new beginning—a move from country to city, to an apartment where they love to entertain. They chose Patino/Wolf Associates as their decorators, sensing that these designers' innovative style would best express their own enthusiasm for exploring this new stage in their lives.

Says Vicente Wolf, "There's lots of outdoor excitement here—like helicopters flying by right in front of your eyes, the river and sliding traffic below, weather fronts blowing in from the harbor, and fabulous stars at night. We didn't want to dilute any of that, so we kept the furniture low and the floor plan simple."

"When we asked the woman of the house what she had in mind for the apartment," adds Bob Patino, "the first thing she said was, 'A glass of champagne!' " Delighted with that vision, the designers worked with a subdued palette of champagne tints, capitalizing on the play of light in the rooms by painting walls in ever-so-slightly different tones that change even more as the day progresses.

Opposite: Living-room lights pick out the textures of a Nevelson collage and nesting tables with an eggshell finish designed by Jean Dunand in the '20s.
Above: On the cocktail table, an Egyptian Ptolemaic mask from 200 B.C., a celadon Ming plate. Suede chairs designed by Ward Bennett can swivel to face the view.





Opposite: The owners often read the papers over coffee in the master-bedroom sitting area among the natural textures of lynx and leather. *Above:* In the dining area, a Henry Moore sculpture swivels on its base so it can be enjoyed from many angles. On the table, Elsa Peretti candlesticks. *Below:* The back wall in the den is sand-textured "like a canvas," says Wolf, and here it is painted with afternoon light. Hydraulic table rises from cocktail to dining height.





Having lived in the apartment for a few years before seeking design advice, the owners knew exactly what kinks needed to be ironed out, and Patino/Wolf were prepared to oblige. To meet the request for a smooth-flowing space, the designers rounded angular structural columns and designed furniture with curving lines; so that an enclosed library could enjoy the same view as the living room, its surrounding walls came down, replaced by a single free-standing unit that holds TV and other video equipment on one side, a Nevelson collage on the other—a gift from husband to wife.

The living room's oversized cocktail table evolved from a tale of woe about a previous table: "It was narrow," say the owners, "with sloping ends, and if we saw one more Bloody Mary go sliding off. . . ."

Known for taking suede and leather out of the "men's club" category and putting it to sophisticated use, Patino/Wolf designed a white leather chair for the man of the house after he resisted sitting on the bedroom chaise. Tactile coffee-toned hides upholster much of the furniture, juxtaposed with more formal silk and satin in the living room, taffeta in the bedroom.

The apartment seems even larger than it is because the same camel carpeting runs throughout—it looks peachier in the bedroom because of slightly deeper walls—and travertine paves the passageways in between.

Recessed lighting makes the most of the apartment's shapes, capturing the roundness of sculpture, a curving wall, picking out particular flowers on the cocktail table, or a collection, as in the bedroom. As for the minimum of art, "too much would be an overload," explains Patino, gesturing toward the window views. □ *By Mary Seehafer*



The back wall of the master bedroom was specially designed to show a collection of 17th-century Chinese porcelains, the shelves dramatically lit both from within and from above. The light trough also highlights a Modigliani pastel on the travertine ledge. Separate telephones are recessed into the surface of the cantilevered storage drawers on either side of the bed. Furniture designed by Patino/Wolf Associates.



LIVING ON THE GRAND CANAL

BY ELAINE GREENE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY CARLA DE BENEDETTI



Silver-stoppered bottles by Alessandro Pianon; a Flemish tapestry.

Venice at the end of the 15th century, says the great student of the Italian Renaissance Jacob Burckhardt, was "the jewel casket of the world . . . with its ancient cupolas, its leaning towers, its inlaid marble façades, its compressed splendor . . ." In those times, probably between 1485 and 1490, the Corner-Spinelli *palazzo* was built near a bend in the two-mile-long Grand Canal. The building is attributed to the architect Mauro Coducci and earns boldface type in all the guidebooks.

A house that is half a millennium old in a city whose political, military, commercial, and artistic history is uniquely rich and dramatic can intimidate its residents. One might easily feel obligated to honor the place and the period of its origin in a solemn, museumlike manner; such obeisance is not uncommon. But Alessandro Pianon, who lives on one entire floor of the Palazzo Corner-Spinelli with his wife, Brita Stone-Pianon, and her two daughters, has a Venetian pedigree of his own several centuries old. He is not daunted by the ghosts of doges. His decorating is proof.

Alessandro Pianon is an architect with an international interior design practice. He has clients throughout his country and has completed recent assignments in New York, Paris, Madrid, and Kenya. Signora Stone-Pianon, born in Germany, is a journalist specializing in interior design. When the couple come back home to Venice from their frequent trips, they want comfort. They want beauty, too, but comfort in a Venetian Renaissance palazzo is what takes some doing. "We love Venice, but it's cold and it's damp," the signora points out.

Warmth underfoot was a prime requirement, and Pianon did not hesitate to carpet the typical Venetian speckled marble floors, which were fairly battered anyway. Extravagant hangings at windows may partially obscure views of the Grand Canal, but they have their softening, warming job to do. Seating is plentiful, deeply upholstered, and built for stretching the legs out full length. Occasional tables stand beside every chair, and there are countless places where one can sit under a good reading light.

Alessandro Pianon is happy to conduct his business in the city of his forebears. He finds the high level of artisan skills in the area an incomparable resource, since he and his staff design decorative elements as well as total interiors—nearly everything in a Pianon room, except for the antiques, is a Pianon design. In and around Venice, fabrics, silver, glass objects, and lamps of several materials are made to his specifications. When Pianon travels to execute a house, he often takes along his Venetian painters and gilders. Their work in his own house was itself a test of their unusual skill.

Before the family moved into the Corner-Spinelli palace, they had more than decorating to accomplish. Their story—it is the topmost—was in a state of considerable disrepair, requiring replastering of walls and restoration of painted, carved, and gilded ceilings. And a complete kitchen had to be built. Pianon has made no major architectural changes, although over the centuries others have: In the 18th century, for example, a new dividing wall was built, including an enormous carved doorway. The Pianons, in the late 20th century, are content in the majestic old rooms just as they found them, and as they made them livable. □



Through the 18th-century doorway one enters the room the Pianons call the *giardino*—the garden room—scene of dinners at one table or two. Venetian glass chandeliers were installed in the 19th century. Behind the windows: the Grand Canal.



In a corner of the drawing room, a table at the window has many uses.
Foreign guests particularly enjoy breakfasting in the sun while watching the canal traffic.
Like much of the furniture, this table is English.

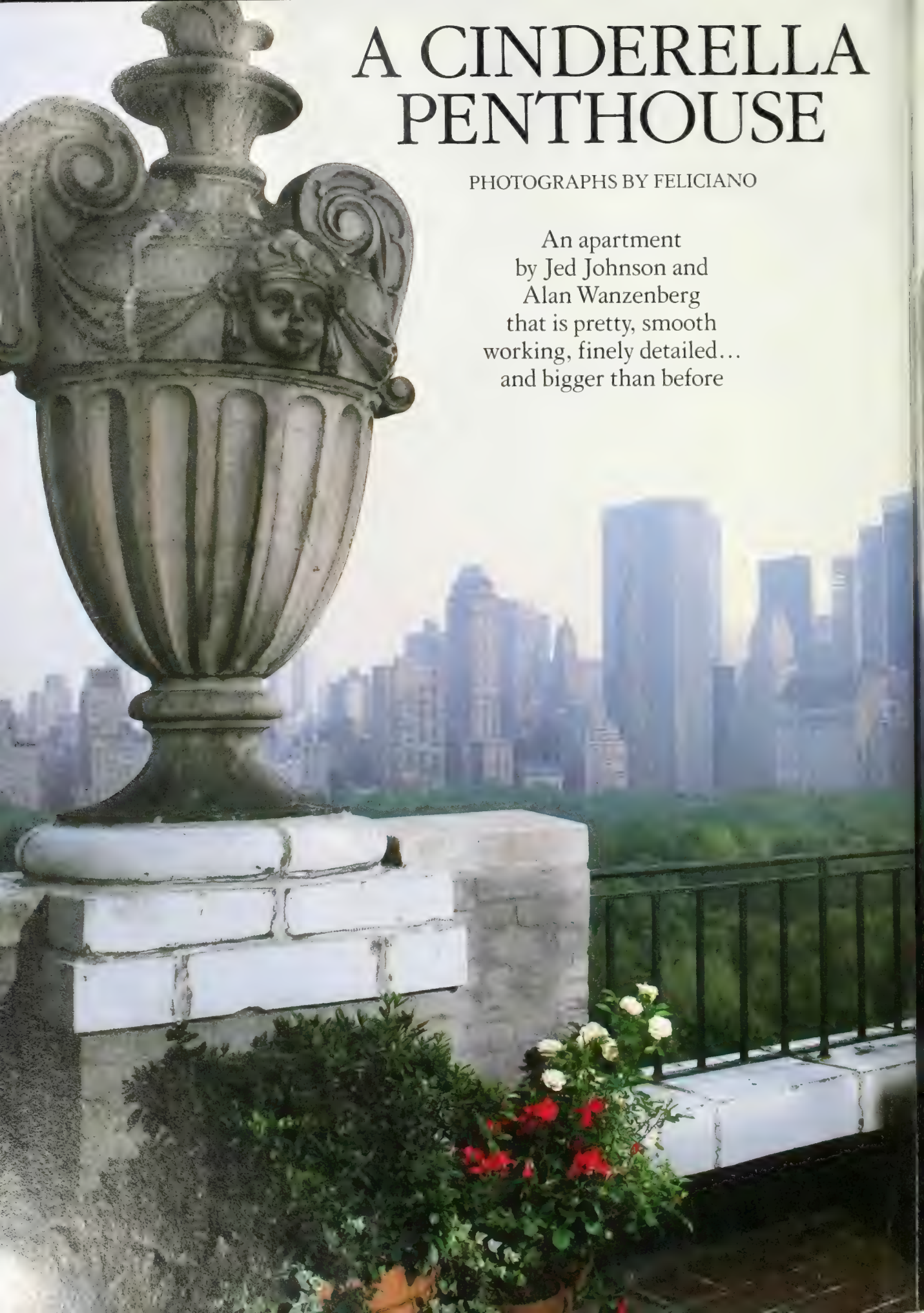


American influences—the antique quilts, the dishtowel-checked bed fabric that Alessandro Pianon designed in a weave heavier than its inspiration—mingle with the Italian: a Florentine painting on stone behind an antique Venetian bed.

A CINDERELLA PENTHOUSE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY FELICIANO

An apartment
by Jed Johnson and
Alan Wanzenberg
that is pretty, smooth
working, finely detailed…
and bigger than before





The owners of this *pied-à-terre* divide their time between the coasts. "We so enjoy our Southern California days of being outside but not in public that we looked for a New York apartment where we could have the same privilege," they told us. That outdoor privacy, a sweeping view of Central Park, and a pair of huge stone urns on the park-side terrace of the tiny penthouse were the plusses that won them over. Everything else was a minus until interior designer Jed Johnson and his partner, architect Alan Wanzenberg, came upon the scene.

The dilapidated structure, essentially one room, had once been the solarium of a two-story apartment in the 1920s building. When it was originally made an independent apartment, the solarium was given an adequate bathroom and a token kitchen; residents had to sleep in an alcove off the living room. Before deciding to live there, the present owners asked Johnson/Wanzenberg whether they could have a real kitchen, a dining space, a separate bedroom, and the potential for privacy both between themselves and when entertaining: altogether an impossible program, one might think. Yet it has been masterfully achieved.

The critical change was the addition of a greenhouse on each of the two terraces. Borrowing a corner of the terrace facing the park, one new glassed-in space contains a dining table

The new greenhouse occupying part of the park-viewing terrace adds an inviting dining space and expands a small kitchen. Wood structure is warmer than metal and looks it; double glass is energy efficient.





Opposite: The living room's seating nestles against the north-view windows—newly installed, as are all the doors. Johnson/Wanzenberg combine 20th-century American and French design with the 19th-century Japanese, finding the two thoroughly harmonious and right on target for their clients' sought-after serenity. Thus: 19th-century Japanese low table holding French Art Deco pottery; contemporary banquette and new Deco-style armchairs. *Above:* On the far wall, a 19th-century Japanese Buddhist altar.

and banquettes. It is roomy enough for a few guests and perfect for the couple, who can spread out newspapers and linger over breakfast while the sun climbs slowly over the park. The glass dining area opens off what is still a small kitchen, but one that is now well-equipped, efficient, and very handsome. Cabinets are natural, waxed white oak; so are appliance facings. The counters are unusual and beautiful: subtly veined, thick green slate with rounded edges. "We had to wait for this slate," say the designers, "since they only quarry the green once a year—but it was worth it. It epitomizes the look and mood our clients wanted—strong, quiet, pure."

The second and larger glassed-in space is the completely enclosed side terrace. This area functions as a study occasionally, but its role as buffer zone between public and private rooms is what transforms the penthouse. "Because we created this new interior space," the designers explain, "we were able to close the bedroom alcove on the living-room side and open it instead to an appealing, plant-filled anteroom that can be part of the bedroom or not." The former terrace is also a comfortable passageway guests use to reach the bathroom. The owners have a second route to the bath through a dressing/clothes-storage room almost as good-looking as the kitchen, with more white-oak cabinets and egg-shaped pewter pulls.



The second greenhouse completely encloses a side terrace. Desk and chair are Stickley pieces.

In addition to increasing space and improving circulation, Johnson/Wan-





Opposite: The scenic painting on both sides of the shoji panels was done by Patrick Kennedy after consultation with the owners. Panels permit various degrees of isolation and openness.
Above left: The designers closed the bedroom alcove on the living-room side and opened what had been an outside wall for wide access to the newly glassed-in side terrace, *above right*. Internal door of the bedroom leads to a well-appointed dressing room and the bath.

zenberg had to resurface all the walls, ceilings, and interior floors—both wood and masonry—replace windows and doors, improve heating and cooling systems, and install new lighting.

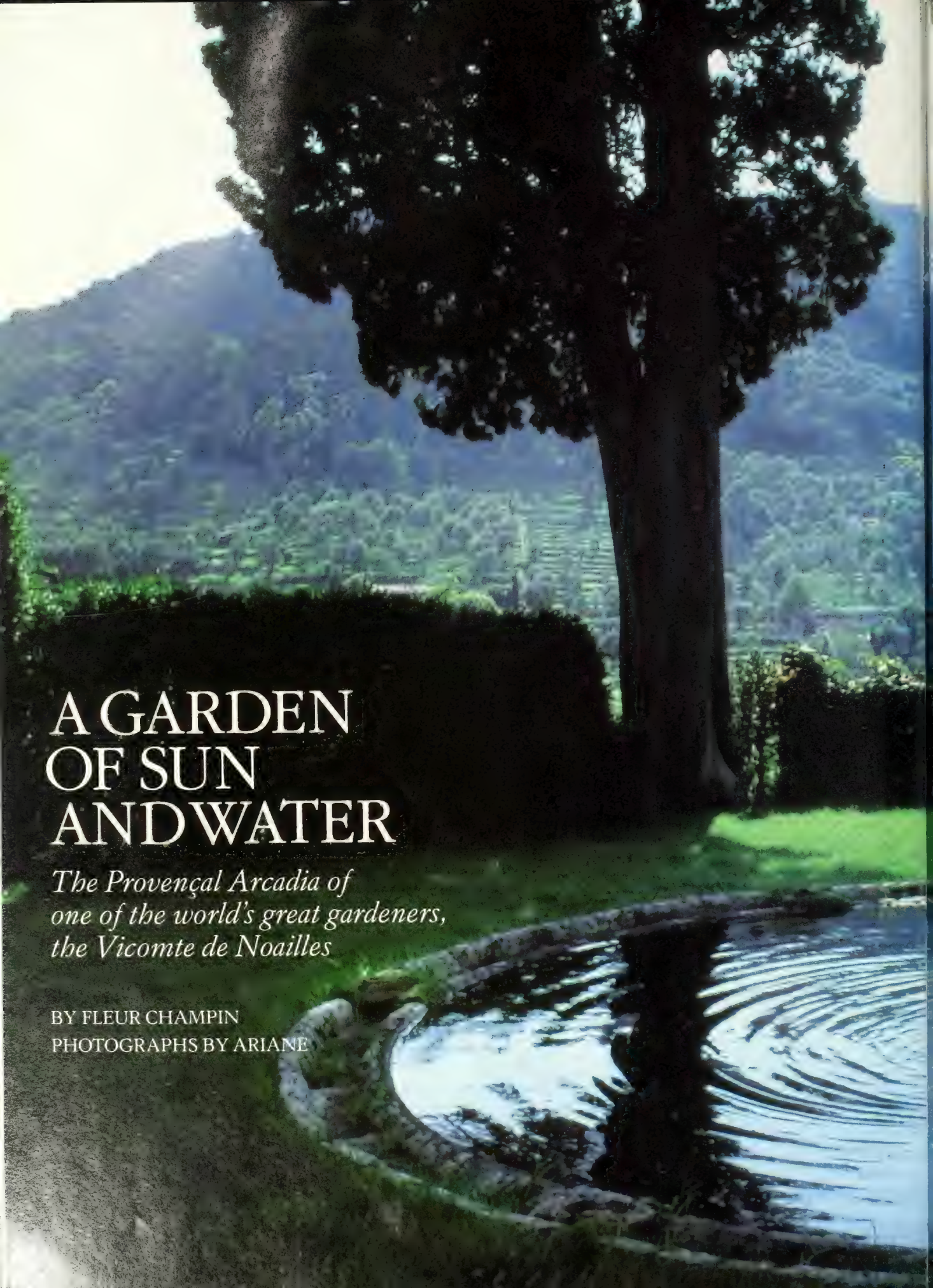
In outlining the style and spirit they sought, the couple, who are Buddhist converts, mentioned Oriental harmony and tranquility. The architectural path to this goal was consistency in materials and form. The designers use one wood and lots of it—white oak for all the trim, cabinetwork, doors, floors, greenhouse framework—oak in its natural color, meticulously crafted in a style that is both plain and refined, with a Far Eastern flavor. The most obvious adaption from the Japanese is the shoji panel wall of the bedroom.

Furnishing for tranquility led to a decorating palette of a few soft, grayed pastels and neutrals, with the exception of a dark-red pattern on the dining seats. A simple, unobtrusive, U-shaped banquette serves as the major seating, while new Art Deco–style chairs are discreetly modish and altogether compatible with the low antique Japanese table they flank. The designers acquired the period Deco fixtures in the bedroom and designed in the same style the alabaster and pewter sconces in the living room. Looking at the finished apartment, they feel that it was "one of the tightest, most complex jobs we have had, but all the hard work that went into making it look uncluttered and effortless paid off." Their clients, who find the penthouse a refuge and a delight, agree. □ *By Elaine Greene*



The terrace beckons for sunlit and moonlit dining, entertaining, and for hypnotic park-gazing.





A GARDEN OF SUN AND WATER

The Provençal Arcadia of one of the world's great gardeners, the Vicomte de Noailles

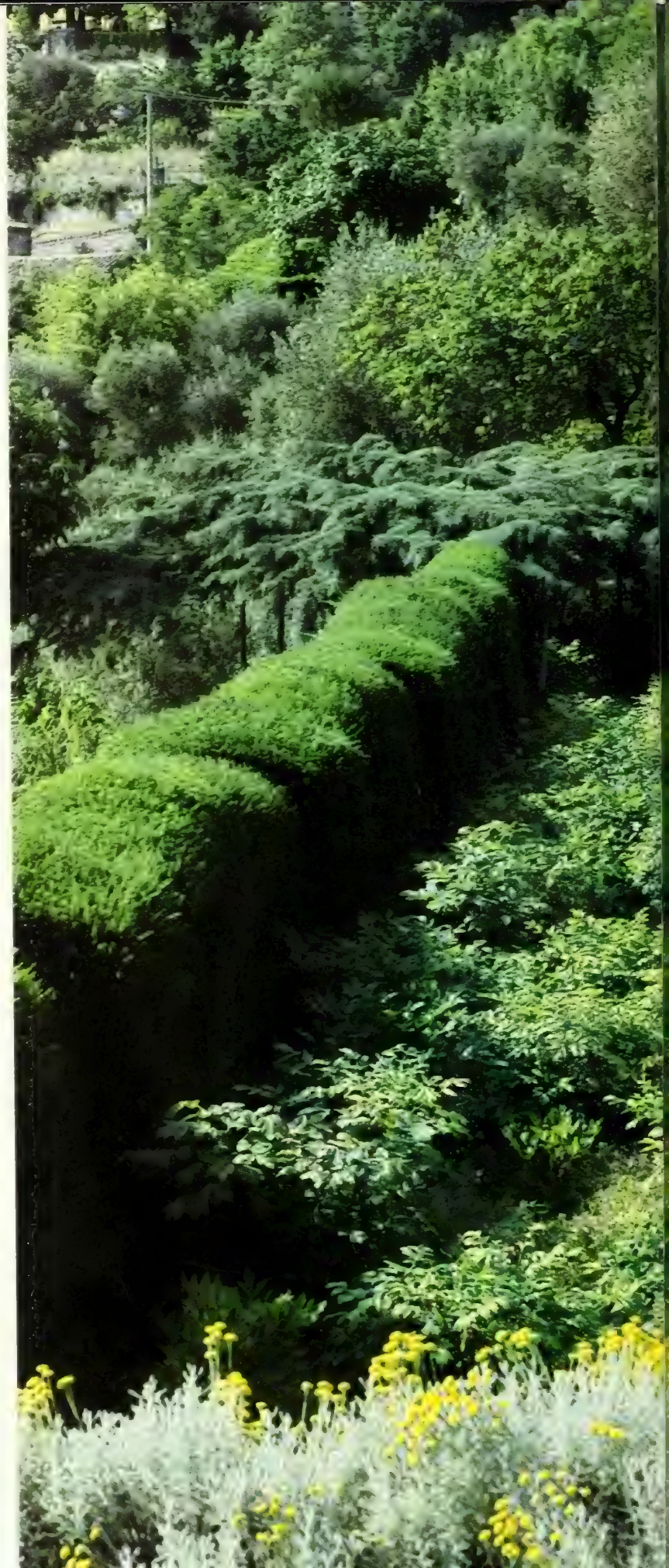
BY FLEUR CHAMPIN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARIANE



In 1923, the late Vicomte de Noailles bought an 18th-century bastide, eight miles from the Mediterranean as the crow flies, with seven terraces, olive trees, Narcissus tazzetta, "which the sheep won't eat," and most important, a spring providing 26,417 gallons of water a day. There he created his third garden, introducing many plants new to the Riviera; there he died on May 10, 1981.

The Vicomte de Noailles belonged to an illustrious family, counting over the centuries many Marshals of France, statesmen, archbishops, and gardeners: It was a Duc d'Ayen who helped Louis XV organize the botanic garden at Trianon.

For 50 years Charles de Noailles had been an authority on gardening. In France, where he sat on many commissions of the Societé Nationale d'Horticulture, and was president of the Societé des Amateurs de Jardins. In England, where he was president of the Royal Horticultural Society, and president of the International Dendrology Society. His knowledge was profound: A widely traveled botanist, he had seen the plants *in situ,* at their best. He knew what had been written about them—his library and files were impressive—and, being no mean designer, he planted effectively. His erudition and encyclopedic memory made it possible for him to introduce wild fantasy into a strictly disciplined setting, to be daring in his plantings, and totally ruthless when they did not respond. He had also *(Continued on page 156)*



Preceding pages: Tall cypresses frame a classic Mediterranean landscape. Ringed by a box hedge dating from the same period, the 18th-century pool now is home to Japanese carp. *Right*: The sunken garden, peonies and oxalis between yew hedges, with a column modeled after an Aldobrandini fountain. *Overleaf left*: On the upper terrace, a pergola of pleached Judas trees, one white to four red trees, an idea suggested by Russell Page. *Overleaf right*: An interpretation of the "Hundred Fountains" at Villa d'Este covered with Helxine soleirolii and Adiantum venustum.









This page: A classic pastoral landscape: lush grass and drifts of daffodils in a grove of olive trees. *Opposite:* One of the many fountains that make the garden at the Villa Noailles sing, this old stone one was discovered at a local auction.



MACKINTOSH PROPHET OF PURE PERFECTION

BY MARTIN FILLER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
TIM STREET-PORTER

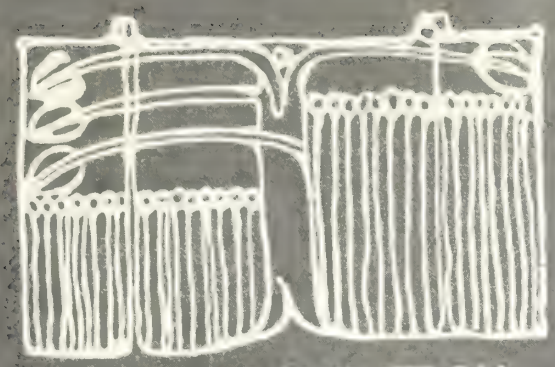






Preceding pages, left: Epitomizing the elegant attenuation and refined linear instinct of the designs of Charles Rennie Mackintosh is this leaded-glass inlay of a stylized woman holding a rose, a favorite Mackintosh motif, on a cabinet door. *Preceding pages, right:* High-back chair dates from 1902, when it was exhibited at Turin and helped establish his reputation on the Continent.

Above: Corner of the studio–drawing room of the house that the Mackintosh and his wife occupied from 1906 to 1914, now reconstructed as part of the Hunterian Art Gallery of the University of Glasgow. *Left:* Another part of the L-shaped studio–drawing room, remarkable in its time for its white color scheme and sparse furnishings. *Opposite, top:* A colophon by Mackintosh from 1901.



C.R. MACKINTOSH

The year 1900 was believed by many to be an auspicious time for new enterprises, and on August 22 of that year a promising young Scottish architect named Charles Rennie Mackintosh embarked on one of life's most important new beginnings: marriage. His bride was Margaret Macdonald, a 35-year-old English-born artist three years his senior. After their wedding at St. Augustine's Church in Glasgow, they repaired to their new home at 120 Mains Street, an apartment they had decorated in anticipation of their new life together. We do not know if Charles carried Margaret across the threshhold in the time-honored fashion, but we do know that they entered into a new world of design, an interior landscape totally unlike the typical decorating of their time.

It can be best defined by what it didn't have. There was no Turkish Corner, there were no *portières*, antimacassars, gilded picture frames, what-nots, chromolithographs, tête-a-têtes, potted palms, Spanish shawls, or bric-a-brac. Instead, the walls, ceilings, and woodwork of the Mackintosh apartment were all painted white. So was most of the furniture—what there was of it. The chairs, tables, desks, and massive canopied conjugal bed, all designed by the groom, were sparingly embellished with delicate decorative details and fabrics devised by his new wife. The curtains were plain, unlined muslin to let the sunlight filter in, and the carpets were solid violet-gray and wall-to-wall. Here and there a few objects were scattered: Japanese prints propped upon a mantelshelf, blue-and-white porcelain, arrangements of brambles, twigs, weeds, and wildflowers in simple containers.

To most people at the time the Mackintosh apartment would have seemed shockingly bare, not refined but unfinished. To our eyes, however, it looks uncannily familiar. Most of the daring innovations of the Mackintosh apartment have long since become standard components of modern decorating, classic solutions whose origins we rarely wonder about, thinking about them, if at all, as part of a timeless design heritage. But in their own time they were nothing less than revolutionary.

The Mackintoshes were so pleased with the interiors at 120 Mains Street that six years later, when they moved to a house in the more fashionable Hillhead section across from the University of Glasgow, they dismantled as much of their old apartment as they could and reinstalled it at 6 Florentine Terrace (later 78 Southpark Avenue when the street was renamed). Although that conventional Victorian semi-detached house at the south end of its row was left much the same on the exterior, Mackintosh altered it extensively inside. Here the interiors were even more remarkable than those at Mains Street, though they largely duplicated the same format. "The loveliest lodging in the world," their friend Lady Alice Egerton called it. To admit greater quantities of light, the architect opened a bay window on the south side of the drawing room, and widened doorways between rooms to create the open, L-shaped spaces of which he was so fond. If the sooty city outside was the grim reality of the Industrial Revolution, then the luminous oasis the Mackintoshes created with their own hands was a fantasy environment in which they could believe that the soul of the artist had escaped the tyranny of the machine.

Charles Rennie Mackintosh's brief transit as one of the most influential architects of modern times was well over by 1914, the year World War I began and the year he left the city that he felt had abandoned him. He moved south, eventually settling in London (where his new architectural practice did not flourish) and sold his Glasgow house to William Davidson Jr., for whom in 1899 he had designed Windyhill, a house in Renfrewshire. After Davidson died in 1945, his sons gave the Mackintosh house to the University of Glasgow, which, despite strong protest, demolished it in 1963 after removing and preserving the interiors. Now the house has been faithfully reconstructed as part of the university's Hunterian Art Gallery. The London firm of Whitfield Partners has been painstaking in its re-creation, even to the same orientation to the south and east, replicating the light that Mackintosh considered an integral part of his interior designs.



Left: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh (1865–1933), talented, independent, romantic, formal, and fiercely protective of her husband, whom she married in 1900. Here in Pre-Raphaelite dress, she carefully gauged her appearance to be an extension of the remarkably unified interiors designed by Mackintosh. An accomplished artist in several mediums, she collaborated with her husband throughout their marriage. *Below:* A silvered-copper repoussé panel of stylized rose-bearing maidens, unsigned but almost surely by Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, part of a white-painted oak desk (see facing page) designed by Mackintosh for their first home together.



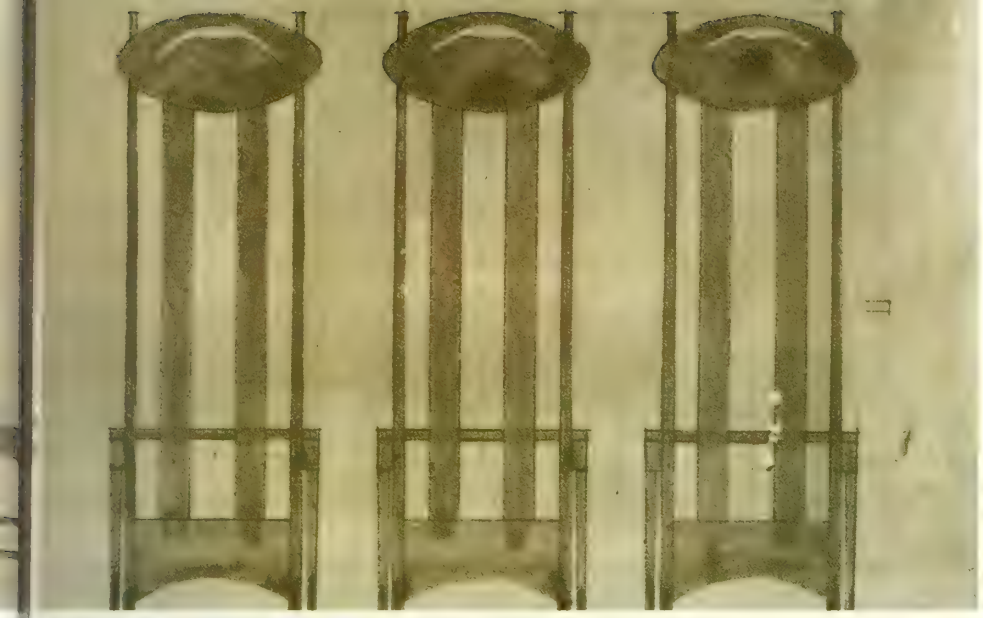
Right: Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868–1928), supremely gifted, perfectionist, taciturn, generous, depressive, and club-footed; his revolutionary designs helped usher in the modern age. He was revered in Central Europe, but was a prophet largely without honor in his own country, though he was the greatest creator of interiors and furniture since Robert Adam, also a Scot. *Below:* Corner of the studio–drawing room in the reconstructed Mackintosh house, with the desk seen in detail on opposite page. The two leaded-glass roundels above it were done by his wife. The high-back desk chair is a variant of an earlier Mackintosh design for the Ingram Street Tea Rooms.





Below: Rose-trellis wallpaper in dining room is stenciled and painted green, maroon, and luminous silver. It was originally made from plain brown wrapping paper. *Right:* Mackintosh watercolor sketch of chairs and table for Argyle Street Tea Rooms. *Far Right:* Mackintosh in 1898 with Hamish R. Davidson, who gave the Mackintosh house to the University of Glasgow in 1945. *Opposite, center left and right:* Pine mantel was moved from Mackintoshes' previous home. Chairs were based on his Argyle Street design.











Reconstructing architectural interiors can present considerable problems, and mere care alone is no guarantee of success in creating an ambiance that approximates what a room was like in its original setting. That is particularly true of rooms that are closely associated with well-known figures, for the temptation is always there for the restorer to err on the side of our latter-day interpretation of what the original owners were really like. Although the biographical information we have about the private lives and personalities of Charles and Margaret Mackintosh is tantalizingly sketchy, the interiors of their Mains Street flat were thoroughly documented in a remarkable series of photos taken in 1900. They are a mine of information on how the Mackintoshes inhabited their rooms, and they served as a basic point of reference during the exhaustive research that went into the reconstruction project. The results are interiors that now seem to await the momentary return of Margaret and Charles, who might just have stepped out for a stroll. These are no lifeless museum rooms, but spaces that have been infused with a vivid human spirit.

Charles Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald met as students at the Glasgow School of Art. Mackintosh and Herbert MacNair, his colleague in a Glasgow architectural firm, had been attending night classes at the school after work. Their highly inventive and unusual designs seemed to the headmaster to be strikingly similar to those being done by two students in the day school, Margaret Macdonald and her younger sister, Frances. He introduced the men and women, and The Four, as they soon were known, became inseparable. Their unity was reinforced not only by their common (yet uncommon) artistic vision but also by kinship and marriage; Herbert MacNair wed Frances Macdonald a year before Mackintosh married her sister.

The Four joined forces in 1893, just as the Art Nouveau style was sweeping like a billowing wave across the English Channel from Belgium and France. Though the Glasgow quartet scorned that style at its most extreme, they were greatly influenced by its more disciplined and distinguished English adaptations, most notably the drawings of Aubrey Beardsley, which they knew from the pages of *The Studio*, the avant-garde design publication that later featured their own work as well.

The early designs of The Four reflected the Art Nouveau taste for highly stylized human figures, especially wraithlike women, in attitudes of ethereal exaltation. This earned The Four the epithet of "The Spook School," and to some adherents of the much simpler Arts and Crafts philosophy, the designs of The Four seemed affected. Though The Four rigorously rejected classification with either the Arts and Crafts or Art Nouveau movements, they were in fact like both in their interest in total design. Indeed, except for some minor accessories, the Mackintoshes' apartment and later house were furnished entirely with objects of their own creation. The coherence that resulted was quite the opposite of most eclectic turn-of-the-century interiors. Mackintosh's designs won many admirers abroad. The early furniture designs of Frank Lloyd Wright (who was a year older than Mackintosh) indicate that he might well have been looking at the magazines that documented Mackintosh's work with increasing frequency, rather than vice versa, as Wright's architecture and furniture designs weren't published in Europe until several years later. It is intriguing to speculate on that possible cultural exchange between Glasgow and Oak Park, Illinois.



Above: Celtic-inspired detail of carved oak lug chair designed by Mackintosh in 1900 for his own house. *Right*: Mackintosh's mahogany writing cabinet inlaid with mother-of-pearl, ivory, leaded glass, and pearwood, which brought a world's-record auction price of $177,000 in 1979.





Above: The master bedroom, with furniture made in 1900 upon the Mackintoshes' marriage. Fourposter was first of several by Mack
White-painted oak cheval mirror is one of his most sculpturally vigorous designs. *Inset:* Leaded-glass panel of bedroom





Although the ideal of total design has resurfaced among some contemporary architects (Michael Graves comes to mind), the designing of all the component parts of architecture and interiors by a single person was never unanimously subscribed to, even in Mackintosh's heyday. In 1898 the Viennese architect and critic Adolf Loos wrote, "I am an opponent of the trend that considers it to be especially desirable that a building has been designed along with everything in it—down to the coal scoop—by the hand of one architect. I am of the opinion that the building can have a rather monotonous appearance as a result. All individuality is lost in the process."

That certainly was not the case with the designs of Charles Rennie Mackintosh. He never imposed uniformity on them at the expense of character. That is why his works utterly lack the insipid undercurrent that runs through so much Art Nouveau design and why, in part, it has been impossible to consign him to that contemporary development. Eighty years after his apogee, he still stands alone. The inimitable rooms of Mackintosh cannot be confused with those of his many lesser imitators. They are instantly recognizable as his—by their purity, freshness, faultless decorative discretion, and, above all, by their astounding originality; although he designed some 400 pieces of furniture in the course of his career, he never repeated himself. Those qualities became ever more pronounced in his designs of the first years of this century.

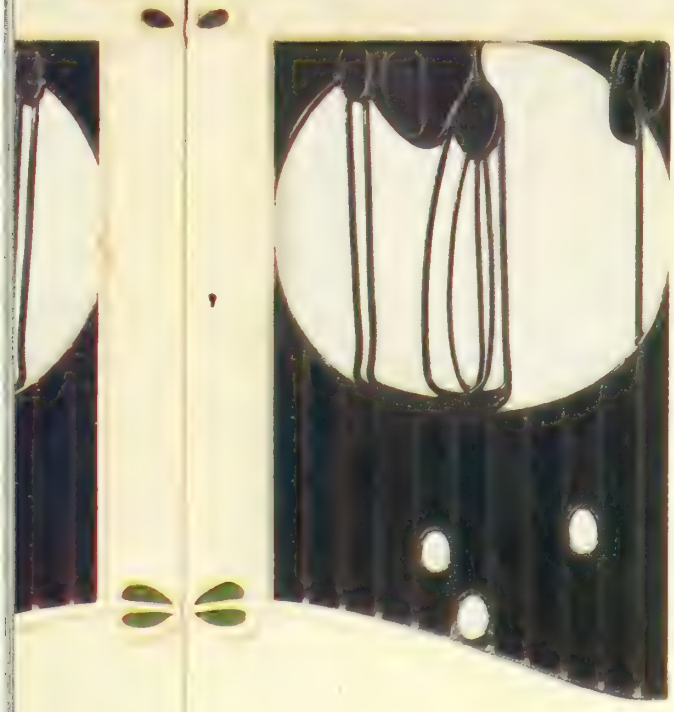
The reconstructed interiors of the house at 78 Southpark Avenue demonstrate that Mackintosh's comprehensive approach did not result in rigidity or sameness. To the many elements he recycled from the previous apartment——including mantelpieces, woodwork, and several very large pieces of furniture—the museum has added Mackintosh pieces originally intended for other interiors, with equally seamless effect. We have to be told which were part of the house to begin with and which were acquired later, for our eye alone has no clue. That was Mackintosh's great strength as an artist and a decorator: he created a body of work that was complete unto itself. The rooms he designed were conceived as a totality, but so was every piece in them. Thus we can experience Mackintosh as fully in a seemingly small detail as we can in his stunningly symphonic orchestrations of architecture and interior space. By the time

(Continued on page 154)













Above: The spectacular bookcase in the studio has panels of stylized blossoms and stems in stained glass, Mackintosh's most sophisticated use of the material. Atop the bookcase are, from left, a brass plaque by Frances Macdonald MacNair, the sister of Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, a blue-and-white Chinese bowl that once belonged to James Whistler, a photograph of a Mackintosh botanical watercolor, and a Japanese print. *Opposite:* Light fixture on stairway in the form of a stylized rose with glass "petals" was part of the famous Rose Boudoir (as was the chair on page 141) that Mackintosh designed for the International Exhibition of Modern Decorative Art in Turin in 1902.



MACKINTOSH

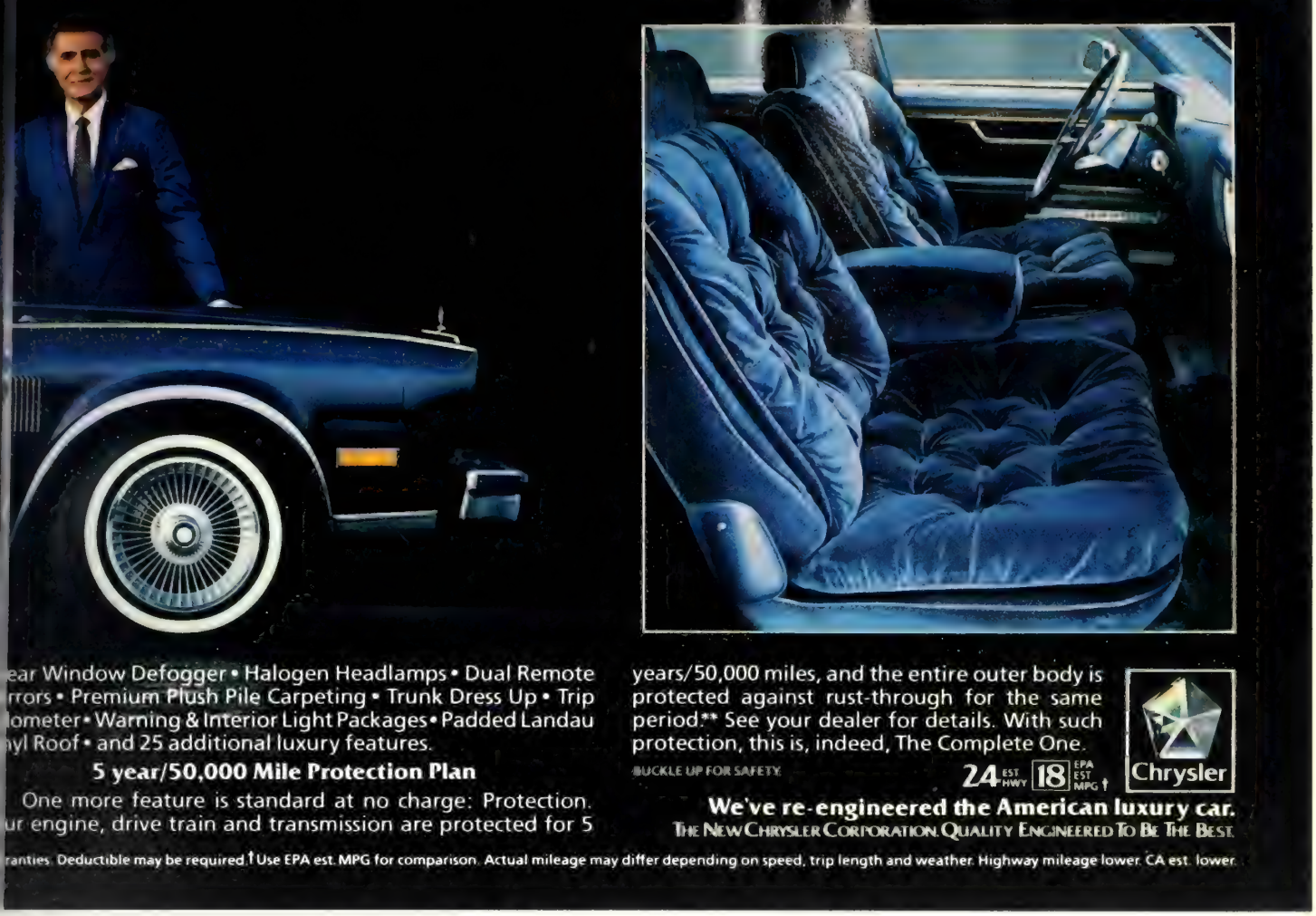
"Like many of the abundantly blessed, Mackintosh wanted precisely what he could not have: in his case, the recognition of the establishment. At the very least, he was far too advanced for them"

(Continued from page 151) Mackintosh moved to that house, he had attained professional heights that he found impossible to sustain; his years in that beautiful house witnessed the beginning of the long, sad decline from which he never really emerged. Dazzling success had come to him early: He was awarded the prestigious commission to design the new Glasgow School of Art building when he was only 28. During the next decade he attracted a small but faithful (and sometimes overindulgent) coterie of clients who largely kept him artificially insulated from the harsh realities of workaday architectural practice in a city whose economic life was dominated by hard-nosed industrialists.

Despite its artistic rebirth at the turn of the century, Glasgow was not, after all, Vienna or Munich or Paris, where the artist was elevated to the role of privileged cultural character. Like many of the abundantly blessed, Mackintosh wanted precisely what he could not have: in his case, the recognition and patronage of the Glasgow establishment. At the very least, he was far too advanced for them. His losing competition entry for a circular domed concert hall for the 1901 Glasgow International Exhibition, for example, was amazingly ahead of its time, anticipating the forms that the Italian architect Pier Luigi Nervi was to employ more than 30 years later.

Furthermore, the extreme nature of his designs made them appear to some to be tied too much to their moment, and the moment of the new free styles at the turn of the century—Art Nouveau in France and Belgium, Jugendstil in Germany, Sezession in Vienna, and Lo stile Liberty in Italy—was a very brief one indeed. That, perhaps as much as anything else, contributed to Mackintosh's crisis. He was a demigod to the young artists and architects of Austria and Germany, but his obscurity at home made that fact ironic and disturbing rather than comforting.

Though bolstered by the devotion and understanding of his wife, Mackintosh found it increasingly difficult to cope with the drop-off of work that followed the completion in 1909 of the second phase of the Glasgow School of Art, his last major architectural job. His tendency to drink now grew into



MACKINTOSH

alcoholism; his lunch hours from his architectural office would often last from 1 to 4:45. Herbert MacNair likewise developed a severe drinking problem. As Gerald and Celia Larner wrote in their book *The Glasgow Style*, "It is sad to think of the celebrated Four sitting together amid suddenly outmoded furniture in the Mackintosh home in Southpark Avenue awaiting commissions and consoling themselves for their non-arrival with drink."

Three of The Four did not survive the Mackintoshes' departure from that house for even 20 years. Frances Macdonald MacNair died suddenly in 1921, Mackintosh himself of throat cancer seven years later, and Margaret in 1933. After her death, their remaining furniture, watercolors (which Mackintosh devoted himself to painting after his architectual career collapsed), and memorabilia were sold off for pathetically low prices. Only MacNair lived on, and he could look back past the sad fates of that once-happy



The Mackintosh house at 78 Southpark Ave., at far left, torn down in 1963.

band. The great Mackintosh biographer Thomas Howarth once went for a walk with old MacNair years after his comrades had died, and when they came across an unusual fir tree abloom with orange flowers, MacNair's face suddenly lit up and he said, "If Toshie'd been here he'd have gone to any lengths to get one of those branches!" By the time of MacNair's death in 1955, The Four had receded into a dim and distant past.

Now, however, the resurrected Mackintosh house allows us to experience the extraordinary surroundings that remarkable pair created for themselves. A French critic of their time, E.B. Kalas, was enraptured by his visit to the Mackintoshes' Mains Street apartment. In 1905 he wrote, "In the stillness of the studio, among a bevy of plants and strewn with the novels of Maeterlinck, two visionary souls, in ecstatic communion from the heights of loving mateship, are wafted still further aloft to the heavenly regions of creation." He was exaggerating only slightly. Their realm was the real world, one often far too real for either of them to cope with. But they dealt with that world by virtually reinventing it, as much for us as for themselves, inspired beyond the normal limits of human powers. □

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America's Heritage

"It was pleasant to see in the gray foliage of the olive trees green-yellow or blue budgerigars. Alas! They promptly forgot their ducal education and failing to come home at night, became an easy prey for local cats"

(Continued from page 134) a wide practical experience to draw on. "That was a mistake" was a frequent comment on unsatisfactory bits of his garden before he set about redoing them.

Shortly after World War I he began creating a garden at Hyères. "I didn't know anything about the plants of the Mediterranean region. By Mediterranean region, I mean that where the olive tree has long been the source of wealth and whose favorable southern limits are those of the orange tree. No book offered me the information I wanted. The numerous botanical books . . . were useful only to experts. Only the book by Mrs. Philip Martineau and Edith Wharton, *Gardening in Sunny Lands,* describing gardens on the Riviera and in California, was useful to me." In 1977, the Vicomte de Noailles and Roy Lancaster wrote their own book, *Plantes de jardins méditerranéens* (published by Floraisse, and in an English edition as well): a must for beginners and experienced alike.

This garden, which now belongs to the city of Hyères, had in January anemones, tulips, and alliums of selected varieties growing "wild" under the almond trees in bloom—a carefully engineered reminiscence of Gothic tapestries.

Then came Fontainebleau, where he had inherited from his mother the Princesse de Poix the pavilion built by Gabriel for Madame de Pompadour. He had to get rid of masses of little pergolas, little rockeries, little rose trees before he could build "on sand and poor soil" his own typical garden, architecturally strict, botanically interesting, and totally delightful from May to October.

From October to May, with brief visits to Paris, where he sat on the board of the *Conseil des Musées,* he gardened at the Villa Noailles, which after the World War II became his winter residence.

The garden at the Villa Noailles does not reveal its pleasures at a single glance. Having parked under an olive tree, you step into another world where the silence is overwhelming! Once attuned to it, you realize birds are singing, and there is the cooling sound of water nearby. To the right, the house is the pale pink color usually associated with the 18th century, and the shutters, a very white sort of blue. The south wall is half-hidden behind an enormous box-hedge and the large blue leaves of Magnolia Delavayi, a fast-growing tree that M. de Noailles managed to propagate by air-layering, and that he gave all his friends with characteristic generosity. To the left through a portico and down three cobblestone steps: You're in a secret, enchanted courtyard, cool and dark, heavily shaded by a well-groomed lime tree. The air is fragrant with the smell of Christmas-box (Sarcococca ruscifolia). Hyacinths and daffodils grown in pots and frequently renewed, as in Louis XIV's Trianon, alternate with bigger pots of camellias, peonies, Pittosporum Tobira, and common box. The colors are subdued and moss covers the tuffa fountain: "To me, a good garden is a place where one finds peace, a shelter from the hardships of life. That is why it should not display too much violent color."

The house's other façade is covered with a mixture of fragrant Holboellia latifolia and Akebia quinata. The impressive boxes have been there since the 18th century: "I cut furiously into that important mass. For two years they looked like dead trees, but box can take it, and young shoots finally appeared. Every year, I try to improve the

urves." When he was 90, finding it vergrown again, M. de Noailles cut it ack. After two years of bare box-unks, the hedge is now perfect. In a ound pool, Kōhaku carp, 16 inches ng, keep the visitor spellbound. rought from the Japanese Embassy in 969, they only eat especially imported apanese food. In 1980 they produced undreds of young; today, 25 survivors rosper—on local food—in various eighboring gardens.

Retracing your steps through a topiary arch, ignoring a tempting marble ench with faded cork "cushions," ou face a sunken garden where peonies, "two of each kind for diversity," et in a crisscross design of oxalis, grow appily, sheltered between two fat ound yew hedges. The eye-catcher is n immense flat-topped Cupressus lusitanica pendula, a present from his nother. Planted there 50 years ago, it ets off a glittering column, a half-scale eplica of one of the Aldobrandini ountains made after drawings sent rom Frascati by the late Prince Aldobrandini.

On your left is a long lawn where ushes, "interesting from Christmas to Easter," include Loropetalum, Garrya elliptica, Sycopsis sinensis, Coronilla, and Prunus Davidiana. The staircase (after Le Nôtre) has oval steps curving outward then inward. At the other end, past two minute square pavilions reminiscent of Hidcote, starts a stone staircase with a hollow track in the middle meant for the wheelbarrows; beside the steps water rushes on its way to the meadow; but no human being can resist exploring the four remaining terraces:

"I'd suffered for years in a garden where water was rationed, that's why I bought this. The spring is 65 yards under the hill giving 100.3 meters a day, even in the summer. Some gardens are famous for their fragrance; I would say of this one that it is water singing."

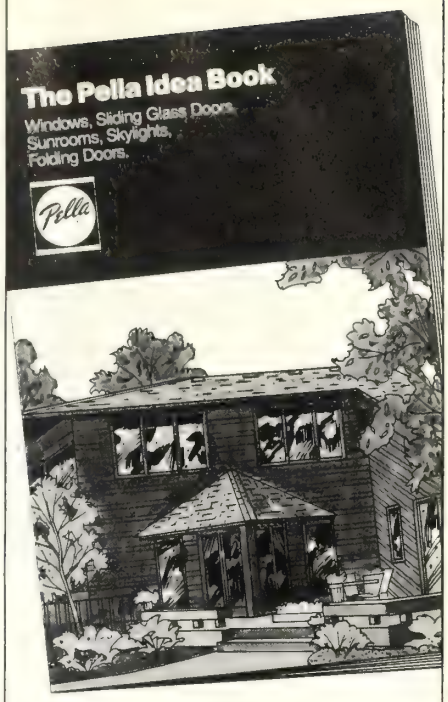
One terrace has been refilled with acid soil and planted with camellias, fragrant rhododendrons, and a stunning Corylopsis pauciflora. Under a 30-foot Photinia arbutifolia, a pyramid, bought from a local antiques dealer, turned out to be an Empire general's tomb. Near the dove tree is one of the monsters of the garden: "I'd like you to admire my metasequoia. It came to Europe in 1965; in 1980 it was the highest in this part of the world, 48 feet. The Royal Horticultural Society sends it members, every year, a list of metasequoias and their respective heights: Mine's the tallest, that's why I'm so proud of it." In the alluvial meadow, flowering cherries compete with deciduous magnolias whose rapid growth will prevent the renewing of the cherry trees, but M. de Noailles had calculated that the Magnolia Campbellii would not be flowering before 1995!

After a welcome halt in the shade of the Prunus yedoensis, a medieval quotation with its 15-foot bare trunk and umbrella at the top, you start the climb up. You cross what 20 years ago M. de Noailles called his "suburban garden," a rockery now filled with Christmas and Lenten roses. A minute tiled garden house provides shade for a forest of camellias; a tiled aviary now stands empty: "Some years ago, after the death of the present Duke of Bedford's predecessor, *Country Life* announced the sale of budgerigars trained to live free and come home at night. I imported some, not without difficulties with the French customs. . . . It was pleasant to see in the gray foliage of the olive trees green-yellow or blue budgerigars. Alas! they promptly forgot their ducal education, and, failing to come home at night, became an easy prey for local cats."

A new small arch after a Wyatt design is already encased in Muehlenbeckia complexa, another example of this deliberate mixture of stone and live things; grazing sheep, carps, singing water or fast climbers. That is probably why the architectural surprises and rare plants merge so completely with the landscape.

However sophisticated the planting, the essential garden remains a Homeric orchard, where "verdant olives flourish round the year." □

Fleur Champin is a lecturer at Versailles and does most of her gardening on the Riviera.



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JOURNAL

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A PROBING DRAMA OF INTERRACIAL LOVE

"The File on Jill Hatch" is remarkable in several ways. This first co-production of the BBC and WNET/13 explores racial, cultural, and social struggles through the story of one family between 1945 and 1981. Jill Hatch (Penny Johnson), child of a lower-class Englishwoman (Frances Tomelty) and a middle-class black GI (Joe Morton), searches for her identity through black, white, and shades of gray. In three parts on *American Playhouse* (PBS). *G.W*



FORGOTTEN SPLENDORS OF "NATURA MORTA"

Italian Still Life Painting from Three Centuries. *National Academy of Design, New York, through March 20; Philbrook Art Center, Tulsa, April 9–June 30; Dayton Art Institute, Dayton, July 30–September 11.*

Masses of flowers, fruits, and vegetables, piles of straw, wood, and ceramic articles, baskets overflowing with breads and cheeses—anyone who has ever strolled the marketplaces of Italy can verify that a talent for still life composition is part of the national character. Odd, then, that so little attention has been given the fine-arts version of this gift for displaying abundance, that this is the first American exhibition to focus on Italian renderings of *natura morta.* Wisely, the organizers of the show, Dr. John T. Spike and a group called the Old Masters Exhibition Society of New York, have chosen to introduce their countrymen to this material not with the usual encyclopedic review of the subject, but with 46 carefully chosen paintings of the first rank.

Still-life painting has a spotty history in all of Western European art, but especially in Italy. There is supposition that the Greeks and Romans created this type of work, but no examples remain. In the Middle Ages, objects, vegetation, and flowers fit into a composition only as thematic support for the religious message of the painting. It wasn't until the very end of the 16th century that nature and objects apart from people emerged as an independent subject, first in Northern Europe, and only later in Italy. Even here the timing and circumstances are unclear, with some historians pointing to a native of Lombardy called Il Caravaggio (1571–1610) as the first to create still-life paintings in his native land.

Caravaggio's commitment to recording what he insisted was "objective reality" suited the spirit of his time, a period of scientific inquiry exemplified by the discoveries of Galileo. To this obsession—he even delighted in showing the flaws in his fruit and flowers—Caravaggio added a genius for dramatic composition and the control of lights and darks. His signature is visible everywhere in this exhibit, for his influence lasted several generations. For example, Fede Galizia's *Still Life with Peaches in a Porcelain Bowl* adopts the master's device of using chiaroscuro, or gradations of light, to give volume to the masses, richness to the color, and to guide the eye across the panel.



Baschenis's *Musical Instruments*

Curiously, only one still life has ever been definitively attributed to Caravaggio, but it was considered too rare to travel and so could not be included in this show. However, several paintings in the exhibit have at various times been credited to Caravaggio. When Samuel Kress bought *Still Life with Fruit and Carafe,* even Bernard Berenson thought it was from the hand of the master. Subsequent scholarship makes this attribution questionable, but the National Gallery, to whom the painting now belongs, still possesses a major example of the genre.



POST MODERNISM LEAPS ONTO THE BALLET STAGE

Architect Michael Graves, who has been setting his hand to an ever-widening range of design commissions, now makes his debut as a stage designer. His backdrop, *above,* and costumes for choreographer Laura Dean's Joffrey Ballet production of *Fire,* which premiered at New York's City Center, created a symbolic Romantic Classical setting far different from the banal clichés of classicism that typify the décors of most large ballet companies. It adds a new perspective, figuratively and literally, to dance.



Still Life with Fruit

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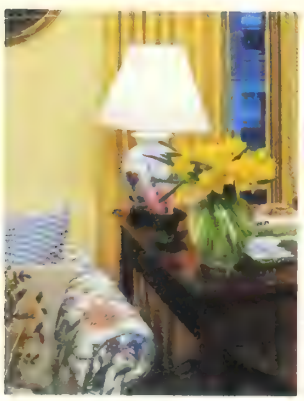
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Indeed, this entire exhibition can serve as a reminder that not all great art and artists have yet found their way to public view—a promise as delicious as these spectacular paintings. □

Mary Ann Tighe

THE RETURN OF THE GREAT SMALL HOTEL





Top: No. 1022's Park Suite, the largest.
Above: The Terrace Suite.

Staying in a hotel has its advantages, of course, but the feeling of being at home usually isn't one of them—especially for the long-term traveler. Real-estate entrepreneur Edward Safdie decided to provide for that kind of traveler when he planned No. 1022 in New York, an intimate new residence hotel on Lexington Avenue at 73rd Street that offers all the amenities of home and then some. With the flavor of English inns and European pensions in mind, Mr. Safdie chose New York decorator Georgina Fairholme, a transplanted Englishwoman, to decorate the hotel, after architect Michael Wolfman had gutted the 1870s building, added another room's width, and created the four suites on the top two floors—three doubles and a single—and a restaurant below.

Miss Fairholme shopped for the hotel as if on a buying spree for herself, and the personal interest shows: a case full of majolica in one suite, reverse-glass Indian paintings in another, English country cabinets, individual tea services. She gave the suites bright color schemes, with chintzes on the chairs and sofas, luxuriously draped fourposters covered with antique American quilts, specially commissioned hand-painted pillows, and hand-painted picture frames hung on the walls with cheerful ribbons.

The suites are rented on a monthly basis only and range in price from $3,800 for the single to $6,750 for the largest double. Maid service is daily, a concierge is on hand, and a butler will take care of cleaning and laundry. The kitchens are small but complete, including individual sets of silver, china, and glass, plus a microwave oven. You can give the staff a grocery list, and they will shop for you. If you don't feel like cooking, order "room service" from Jack's downstairs or step next door to Word of Mouth, New York's premier gourmet take-out shop. Terrycloth robes and British toiletries await you in the bathroom, along with a Jacuzzi and a temperature-controlled shower. Each suite also has remote-controlled televisions, a stereo system with a choice of cassette tapes, a complimentary bar, a wood-burning fireplace, a private telephone number that bills calls automatically to your real residence, a telephone-answering machine, and the top two suites have electronically controlled skylights. There is even reading material provided, from magazines to coffee-table books.

The hotel also offers chauffeur service, and, perhaps best of all, just like the folks at home, the staff anticipates your return—you can leave your wardrobe in one of the ample storage closets until your next sojourn at No. 1022. □ *Alice Gordon*



RARE FURNITURE BY AN AMERICAN MASTER

On view at New York's Daniel Wolf Gallery is a print table by Frank Lloyd Wright, circa 1903, identical to one in the Metropolitan Museum's new Little house room. This one, however, can be examined closely. □

GREAT PERFORMANCES: ACTORS WHO CAN CREATE A FILM



Jessica Lange in her tour-de-force title role in *Frances*

Last year may not have been one of the best in American movie history, but it was a year that offered a remarkable number of major feats of acting. Ben Kingsley's in *Gandhi*, and Paul Newman's in *The Verdict*, for example.



Hoffman as Dorothy in *Tootsie*

These performances have little in common but ambition, scale, and an almost heroic ability to communicate the essence of an extreme human possibility—saintliness in Kingsley's case, and self-disgust in Newman's. Kingsley's impersonation of Gandhi spans 55 years in the great man's life; Paul Newman's performance as a down-and-out Boston attorney encompasses no more than a few weeks. Both present the spectacle of transformation—an actor remaking a character physically and

Continued on page 162

FLOWERS

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Irving Penn is one of the most famous photographers in America today. His exhibitions at The Museum of Modern Art and at The Metropolitan Museum have been praised by critics of both art and photography. In 1967 Penn turned his unique eye to the subject of flowers. From then until 1973 he photographed a different species of flower for each Christmas issue of *Vogue*. Now, in this superbly printed book, these matchless photographs have been collected, along with many others that are reproduced here for the first time.

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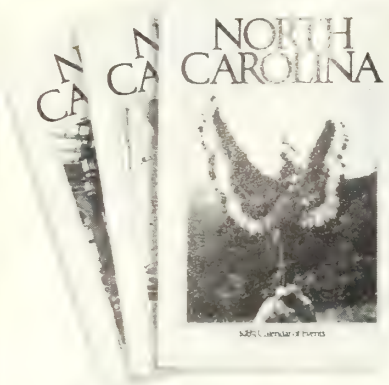
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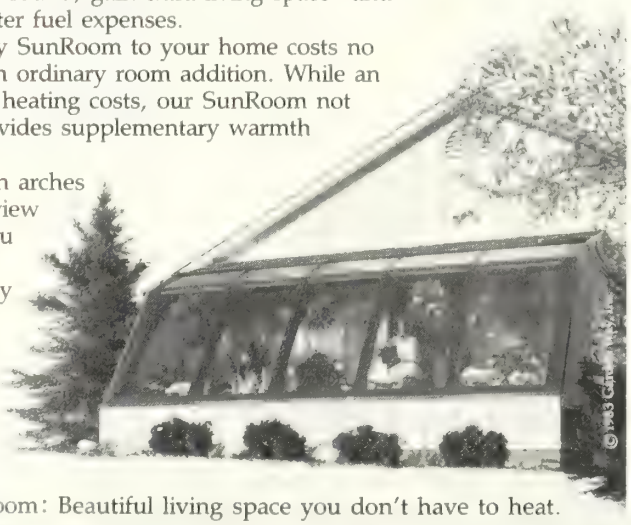
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(Continued from page 160) morally before our eyes. Meryl Streep, in *Sophie's Choice,* Alan J. Pakula's earnest film adaptation of William Styron's novel, shows us a transformation of a different sort. Sophie, a Polish Catholic survivor of Auschwitz, has emigrated to America, winding up, in 1947, in a comfortable old boarding house in Brooklyn. This woman has been through hell, and she carries around a nearly unbearable burden of suffering and guilt; but she is determined nevertheless to make a life for herself, to embrace everything American, to speak English in a cultivated way. Surely Streep's Polish accent and hilarious struggles with English are among the most wonderful examples of acting technique we've seen in recent years. The eager smile that accompanies each broken utterance, the pathos of her longing for life bursting through misery, have already sent audiences reaching back for comparisons to Garbo and the young Ingrid Bergman.

Sophie has fallen in love with a psychotic intellectual Brooklyn Jew, Nathan (Kevin Kline), and enjoys the admiration of young Stingo (Peter MacNicol), a virginal Southern-novelist-in-training (the Styron autobiographical figure). Both these roles are inadequately conceived and acted: Kevin Kline uses the license of insanity to work up a variety of dissociated moods in a completely external style; Peter MacNicol is stuck playing a young man with no apparent personality, a quiveringly sensitive figure who, in a rather unpleasant denouement, grows up into a writer by watching Nathan and Sophie suffer (they appear to have sacrificed themselves to him). Streep can't really connect with either of these two men; indeed, most of the movie consists of monologue (with some flashbacks to her days in Poland and at Auschwitz). In passages of recollection for 10 minutes at a time, she appears to be falling through layers of consciousness, only to rise again, with heroic effort, and a heart-wrenching smile, to the present. The whole movie is really in Meryl Streep's face. I don't think anything else in *Sophie's Choice* is successful, but for long periods, as Streep talks, the rest of the film doesn't matter.

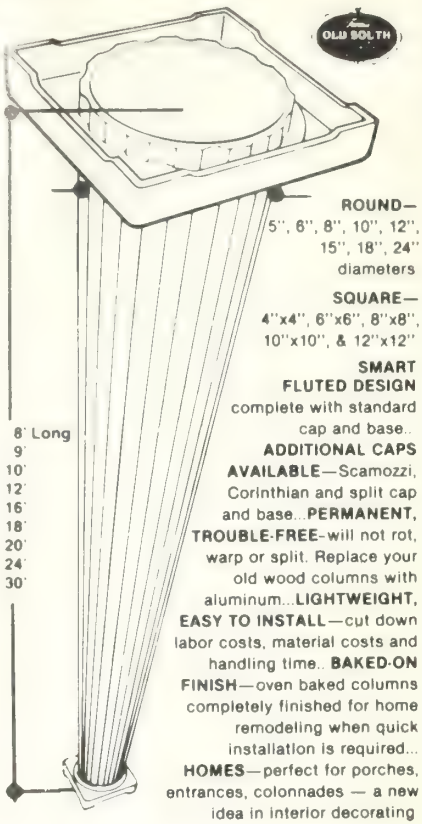
Sophie represents an older ideal of woman—spiritually pure, self-sacrificing, ennobled by suffering. Frances Farmer, the doomed Hollywood and Broadway actress, who is the subject of the film biography *Frances,* is perhaps an early version of a contemporary ideal. I say "perhaps" because one can't tell from the film whether Frances Farmer was merely outspoken and independent or slightly mad—a woman who would have been out of joint at any time. As Frances, Jessica Lange suggests both possibilities—the way a woman who is abrasive, outspoken, and slightly crazy may rub against the prejudices of a given time, encourage people to strike back, and so reinforce the conditions of her destruction. Lange gives Frances a disturbing harsh candor, an aggressiveness that flirts with lewdness. No one can accuse Lange of taking the easy way out and portraying this woman as a mere victim. If the movie built around Lange had been even half-convincing, this performance would have been recognized as a classic.

Without doubt the most completely integrated and self-accepting female character of the season was Dorothy Michaels, the soap-opera actress played in drag by Dustin Hoffman in *Tootsie.* Dorothy is pleasant, helpful, a good sport, but she also stands up for herself, refusing to be patronized, and helps other women. The cruel joke of *Tootsie* is that as a woman, Dustin Hoffman (an out-of-work actor) can see the ways that women are mistreated and how their conditioning makes them accept mistreatment, but once he takes off his dress and goes back to being a man, he treats women as badly as anyone. In *Tootsie,* no one escapes satire, but no one escapes sympathy either. The movie is about the mistakes almost all of us make, and the needs we all have. *Tootsie* resolves the problems of masculinity and femininity in a harmony of ridicule; it's one of those rare movies that unite all sections of the movie audience. □ *David Denby*

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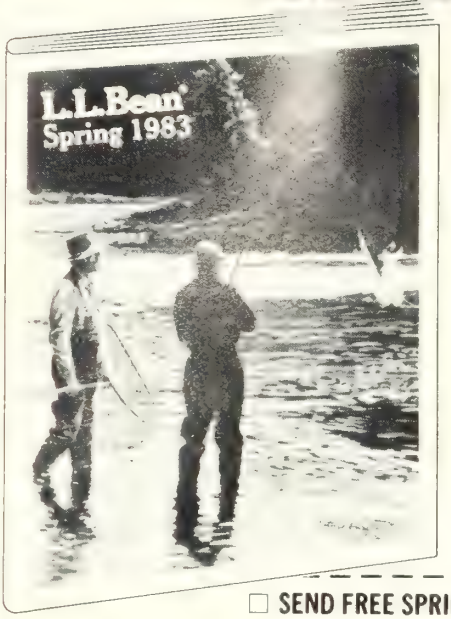
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Scene from *Das Rheingold*, first part of the Wagner tetralogy, in the Bayreuth staging of Patrice Chéreau.

Richard Wagner it was who first raised that as-yet-unanswered question: How much can a person get away with in this world simply on the pretext of genius? But then Richard Wagner gave the world—nay, *hurled* at the world as Wotan might his spear—his *Ring of the Nibelung*, and the question was rendered moot. The creator of this, the most dazzling, daring, all-encompassing artwork of Western mankind, must surely be forgiven all his sins, those he committed during his 70 years on earth, and those he still contemplated at the time of his death.

That death occurred 100 years ago this February 13, and there will be a great deal of Wagner this year to mark the anniversary. At the Festival Theater in Bayreuth, most hallowed of all Wagnerian shrines, a new staging of the *Ring* will take the boards this summer. Half a world away, San Francisco's opera will initiate a new *Ring*, two parts this summer and two later on, while in Seattle, that unlikely but thriving Wagnerian stronghold, the entrenched annual *Ring* ritual, once around in German and once

Continued on page 166

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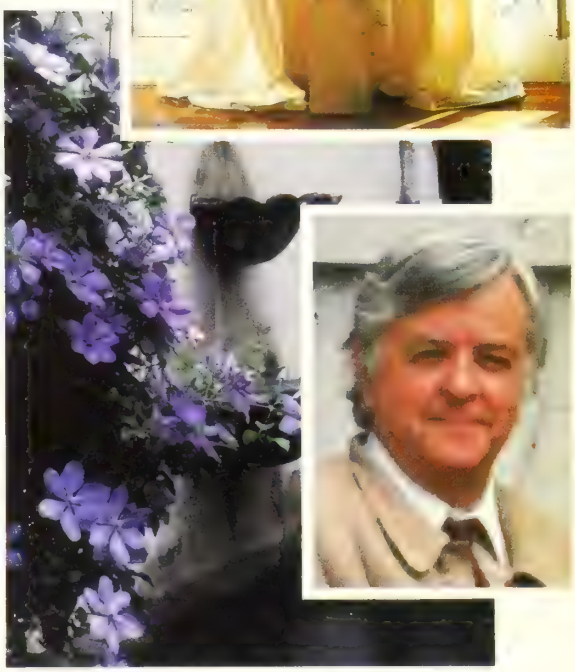


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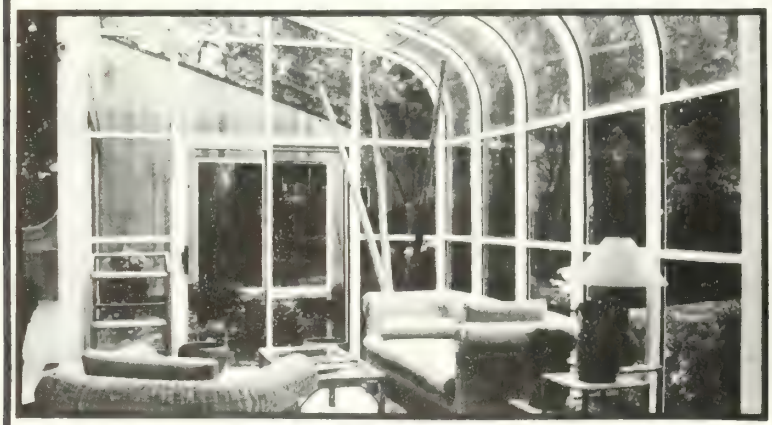
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Continued from page 164

in Andrew Porter's excellent Englishing, will again draw the true believers from far and near.

Sooner than any of this, and far more accessible, comes the whole of Wagner's stupendous conception on public television, straight from the source, a Bayreuth *Ring* in glowing lights and shadows delivered at your doorstep and mine through the wonders of that much-maligned idiot box in some of its finest moments of cultural primacy. Not everyone, staunch Wagnerite or otherwise, will be enthralled in equal measure by this strange, crazed conception that PBS is sending our way this season (in seven installments that started with a documentary on How It All Happened). This is the staging, by Patrice Chereau, that set Bayreuth to mingled cheers and catcalls when it was new, the one that sets Wagner's eternal fable into an industrialized Europe of the mid 19th century with the Rhine Maidens sporting over and around a hydroelectric dam and a bourgeois Wotan in a Prince Albert frock coat. Yet against these startling (to say the least) visual innovations there is the surging musical performance under Pierre Boulez, surmounting a not-always-dream cast to provide an extraordinary laying-bare of both the immediately audible wonders of Wagner's score and the incredible welter of detail that you seldom hear so brilliantly brought forth. Boulez's part in this 1976 Bayreuth production has been in circulation for some time, via a digital recording (Philips 6769074, 16 disks), but that important record project is clearly little more than a teaser for the audio-visual experience now at hand.

Strange, isn't it: not so long ago a complete recorded *Ring* just seemed too much to hope for. Now there are seven in general circulation, another under way, and nobody-knows-how-many pirated performances of respectable estate. It's also a safe bet that this new TV production will eventually be preserved on some home-video format: cassette, disk, or both. That snob, that supreme elitist, that peerless avatar of the notion that music should stand as the *excelsis* of all

arts, as the bearer of eternal verities and the object of pilgrimage to the favored few . . . that very Wagner has now become a household name.

And Wagner himself—how would he regard his current media stardom, were he to drop in upon the whoop-de-doo of this year's centennial celebrations? Chances are, he'd be delighted at the broad iconoclasms in Chereau's updated staging, most of all, probably, at the way Chereau and an inspired singer/actor named Heinz Zednik have made the conniving character of Loge, whose mastery of double-dealing sets this whole massive drama into orbit, into the near-image of Wagner himself. This legend, after all, is the timeless thread on which much of civilization's fund of faith is strung, from the rise and fall of mankind in the Garden of Eden, the fable of Prometheus, bringer of fire, straight on through the Nordic myths that Wagner turned to his own devisings, right up to the irresistible sweep of the *Star Wars* sagas of our own time.

Chances are, too, that the very notion of his gigantic conception now transmuted into the plaything of the media would gladden that pragmatic Wagnerian heart. If Wagner were starting out today, there's no question that his Bayreuth would be some corner of George Lucas's *Star Wars* manufactory up in the California hills, that his Siegmund and Hunding would confront one another with a couple of Darth Vader's laser swords, and that his latter-day Brunnhilde would find herself frozen into a slab of stone as befell the intrepid Han Solo. Come to think of it, the correspondences between the musical/dramatic magician Wagner and the visual/technological magic of the contemporary Lucas are too close to be mere coincidence. And they stand as proof, if further proof were necessary, of the timeless grandeur of the *Ring* and the unassessable genius who brought it to earth. □ *Alan Rich*

Note: Die Walküre, Acts II and III, appears on April 11; *Siegfried*, Acts I and II, on April 18.



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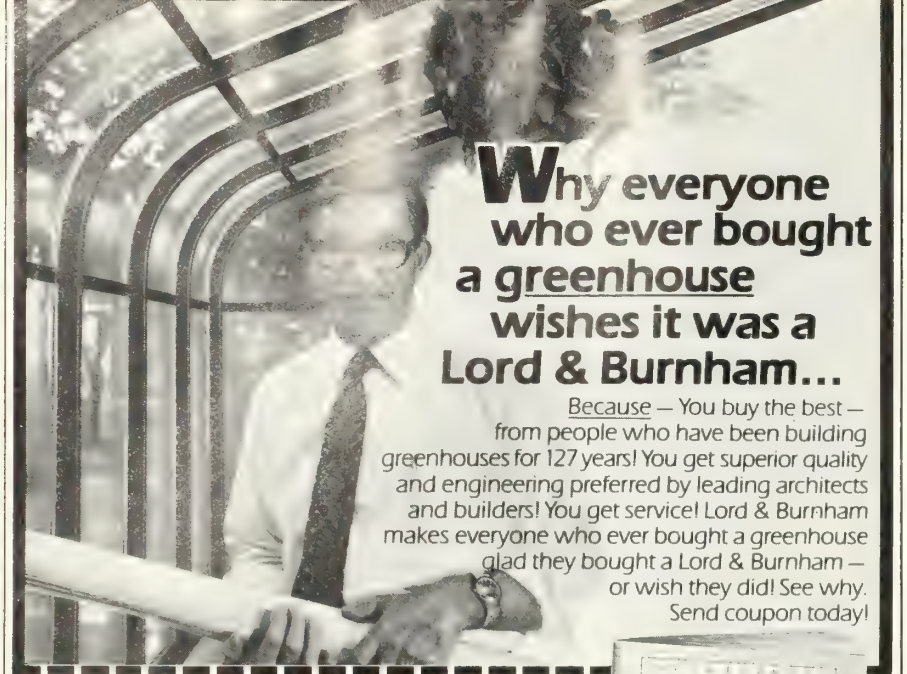
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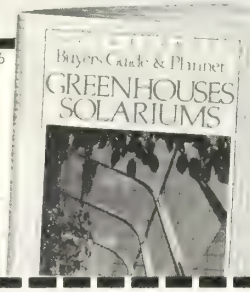
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Agatha Christie didn't involve all her characters in murderous plots. She let a few (found in her short stories) lead less-violent lives of love and adventure. Four of these stories have been dramatized in PBS's *Mystery!* series beginning Feb. 17. "Magnolia Blossom" (Feb. 24) tells the story of one very controlled wife, Theodora Darrell (Ciaran Madden), her weak-willed cad of a husband, Richard (Jeremy Clyde), and of course, a fascinating "other person." In this instance, he's Vincent Easton (Ralph Bates), an orange grower from the Transvaal. An entertaining but far from memorable teleplay of passion, financial ruin, and self-sacrifice follows. The 1920s costuming, however, is superb. Other stories dramatized are "The Manhood of Edward Robinson" (Feb. 17), "The Red Signal" (Mar. 3), and "The Girl in the Train" (Mar. 10).

In hopes of making March's pledge week more fun, PBS presents *The Great Whodunit!* (Mar. 10), a 70-minute program consisting of five mini-mysteries with intriguing titles such as "A Ruse Among Thors," "Daylight Savings Crime," and "Same Crime Next Year," all filmed in the Boston area. Guest stars include Tammy Grimes and Geraldine Fitzgerald. After the facts are given by such actor/sleuths as William Conrad, Gene Barry, and Howard Duff and the viewer is returned to the scene of the crime, there's a break in the program. Just enough time to solve the crime at home, as well as a moment to be reminded to make a pledge. □ *Gabrielle Winkel*

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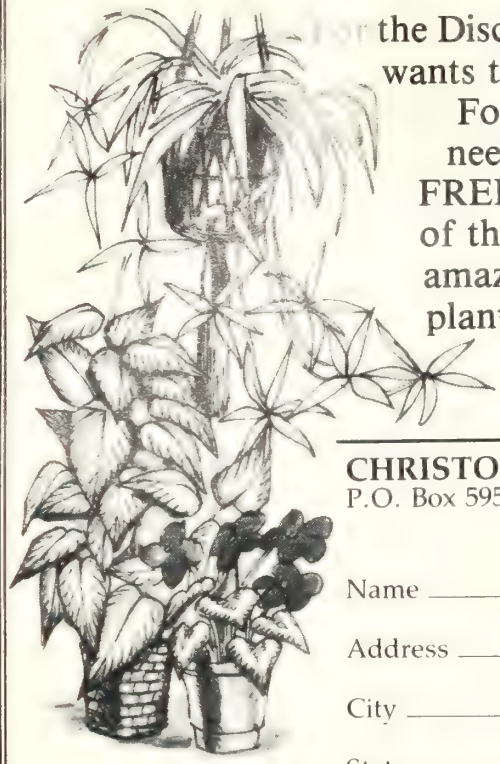
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LETTERS

I have never written to a magazine editor before, but your new issue arrived today, and I felt I had to write. Your new format is stunning!

In a time when the quality of so much that is offered to the public is declining, it is a real pleasure to see an *elevation* of quality.

Your magazine articles are intelligent and witty—I loved the piece on the "Unstately Homes of England." The photographs with it were inspired, and hilarious! The serious articles are thoughtful. Having studied with Michael Graves, it was good to see an article on his work that was neither a paean nor a hatchet job, but sought a balanced view of what his contribution to architecture might eventually be.

The photography is superb—even the ads look good. Congratulations! I'll look forward to my monthly issues with new enthusiasm.

Patricia R.F. Danielson
Senior Planner, The Eggers Group
Trenton, New Jersey

January House & Garden is an elegant personal triumph. It is, indeed, a museum-quality publication. It is amazing. The paper quality, the color separations, the photography of Marina Schinz, the art telling of Linda Nochlin, the historical aspect of all things great and small by Martin Filler.

This magazine will bring all human beings up a notch. It will raise our conscious awareness. It will make us redefine anew . . . old spaces. Sybil Klein
Houston, Texas

Regarding the new House & Garden—*Wow!!!* Jerry Loomis
La Jolla, California

I have been looking forward to your new format with both great excitement and some fear. Excitement because I know that something as wonderful as House & Garden can always be made better, and some fear because I have loved H&G irrationally for so long there was a side of me that was afraid of losing anything.

Well, I want to share my impressions with you. First, the quality of the paper, graphics, photography, color, and layout are vastly improved and I am thrilled. One other thing I have always wished for was more of H&G and your greater length is much enjoyed.

House & Garden has been real—a real help, showed real people, and had great how-to articles that have had real effect on my architecture, decorating, gardening, cooking, and entertaining.

The new House & Garden seems to have slipped away from reality a bit—i.e., no people in it, no floor plans, none of that how-to quality (I'll never forget your article on Sister Parish putting together a room—that was real and useful and entertaining, and to me epitomized House & Garden).

Please know I still love you and will never desert you and I think you have made many improvements—it's just that I don't want you to lose anything.

John Bissel
Tucson, Arizona

I was *delighted* to receive my copy of House & Garden in last week's mail. What a difference! What a pleasure! What a triumph! You must and should be very proud of the result and I'm looking forward to the next issue.

Emily Malino
Vice President, Perkins & Will
Washington, D.C.

Kudos on the new redesign! My copy arrived yesterday and I am thoroughly enjoying it. I must say, however, that before I opened the magazine, I was afraid it would be a carbon copy. . . . Not so! The new House & Garden has wonderful substance and is not just a collection of glossy ads. Please try to keep it chock full of articles *all* decorating and home enthusiasts can relate to.

Kathi Walton
Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina

Yesterday I received the January issue of House & Garden and just felt today that I should write and tell you how much I love the new publication. It is elegant and reminds me a little of the House & Garden of years ago. I'm sure Condé Nast would be very proud of it if he were here.

Thank you for giving your readers such an excellent magazine, and just in time for Christmas, too! It's like another gift to put under the tree.

Betty Purdy
Evanston, Illinois

Send letters to: Editor, House & Garden, 350 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017.

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PORTLAND AND WESTMORELAND PLACES

Two magnificent 19th-century private streets in St. Louis

By Christopher Gray



Composite photo-panorama of Westmoreland Place, surrounding the capsule-shaped mall at left, and Portland Place at parallel to right.

There are many sights to see in St. Louis—the arch, Louis Sullivan's Wainwright Building, Eads Bridge—but the connoisseur of the house and garden should see above all else Portland and Westmoreland Places. St. Louis is unique among American cities for its private residential streets, and of the 50-odd examples that still survive, Portland and Westmoreland are the most magnificent, a high point in the history of American residential enclaves.

The private-street movement began in St. Louis in the mid 19th century as a continually expanding city provoked homeowners to insure residential continuity in their surroundings. Typically, a real-estate developer would lay out a gated, private street and sell lots subject to legal restrictions—from single-family ownership to triple curtaining to regular scrubbing of the front steps.

Portland and Westmoreland run parallel to each other, intersected by the stubby Lake Avenue, and each street contains 40-plus houses, generally built from 1890 to 1930. The houses range from a comfortably large 20 rooms to a simply huge 45 rooms, but they are set in relatively small plots—one-half to one acre—giving this enclave a distinctly urban character. At each end of Portland and Westmoreland are gatehouses with pedestrian and vehicular entrances clearly signifying private streets.

Julius Pitzman, surveyor-designer of most of St. Louis's private places, laid out Portland and Westmoreland for a real-estate syndicate in 1887. By 1888, two groups of prospective householders had purchased the land on the two streets and *(Continued on next page)*

Continued from preceding p[illegible] set up architectural and occupancy restrictions, including maintenance procedures for the streets and plantings, and a prohibition against the burning of soft coal. Pitzman, who served as a board director for both of the street associations, distinguished his latest creations by providing a wide, grassy mall down the center of each street, which adds to each private place the character of a private park as well.

The first houses to go up were starkly Victorian, mostly granite and brownstone, but by 1905 they had been joined by a museum of high-style architecture—Renaissance and Classical, château and baronial—a sort of Midwestern Newport. Unlike Newport, the small plots produced tightly planned houses, and the third-floor ballroom became a common feature. These were often the homes of the "Big Cinch," a group of 40 or 50 elite, powerful, frequently German St. Louisians—although "lager Germans," such as the late Adolphus Busch, were not particularly welcome, no matter how rich. Had the building of these 40-room palaces continued, Portland and Westmoreland would today be like Newport's Bellevue Avenue—magnificent, but coldly magnificent. However, by 1910, new, less opulent styles were going up, substituting red brick for limestone and marble. The house of Dwight Davis, founder of the Davis Cup, at 16 Portland, was typical of this second generation of more discreet homebuilding.

By the 1930s all the house lots were occupied by houses or private tennis courts, and the result was a pleasant combination of the palatial and the simply comfortable architectural grandeur balanced by a sense of refined domesticity. As Charles Savage, the recognized historian of the St. Louis Places, has written, Portland and Westmoreland were where "the private-street concept in St. Louis saw its fullest and finest development." Although actual gardening was minimal because of the small lots, and the plantings in the common areas were usually just shade trees and a few bushes, the ensemble equals or surpasses anything done in American country-club districts in the period.

Now Westmoreland and Portland are quite distinct from other similar St. Louis streets. They retain a good number of original-occupant families, and in their Lake Avenue connection they are a stronger unit than the nearby but unconnected Washington Terrace and Kingsbury Place. Their proximity to Forest Park, one block away, has also produced one of the most ideal situations in America for the urban horse fancier—some stables remain unconverted to automobile use, and businessmen can return home at the end of a day to enjoy an hour of riding literally at their doorsteps.





Top: The John T. Davis house, and, above, the W. K. Thornburgh house, both built during the 1890s, typify the early crop of imposing *palazzi* in historic-eclectic styles on Portland and Westmoreland Places.

It has not always been such a rosy picture on Portland and Westmoreland. By the 1920s, the burning of soft coal had become so bad in St. Louis that "people deserted the city because of the smoke," in the words of Norris H. Allen, a Westmoreland Place resident whose wife's family has been there since the original incorporation. At the end of a working day he would come home to find a ring of soot around his collar. "Then the motorcars were in and people moved out to the country—it darn near destroyed the city." In the 1930s several of the big houses, unsaleable, were torn down or shorn of floors or wings. A younger member of another family, on Portland and Westmoreland since the 1920s, observes, "These neighborhoods have gone through life cycles, just like people. Many years ago, it was predominantly younger people. Then there was a gradual movement of their children's generation out to the country, and by the '50s it was mostly older people. But now younger people are moving back."

But even at their darkest moments Portland and Westmoreland were never "struggling neighborhoods," but only verged on a static gentility. One reason was undoubtedly the common bonds of marriage and friendship that still cement the established families, much like the mutual business interests of the capitalists who first lived there.

The Love family is a case in point, with three separate households on Portland and Westmoreland, and blood or marriage relations with three other families who live there. Other multiple householders, whether by marriage, inheritance, or simply moving, include the Catlins, Davises, Johnsons, and Simmonses.

This continuous and intimate social fabric of the blocks is, as much as anything, the major barrier between the long-time residents and the newcomers who have given up the suburbs. The newcomers tend to describe the houses by street address; the established residents describe them by their former, often original occupants, and for them each house is an open diary of marriages, births, deaths, and other familial events.

Mrs. Norris H. Allen, who remembers that "my grandfather, William L. Huse [one of the original Westmoreland Place incorporators], got his friends from Lafayette Square to come out here and build the first houses," also recalls that it was originally a closed, self-sufficient community: "Every night they would have whist games, all people from the block, it was sort of a club. They were all good friends—the husbands had the same type of business interests." Her grandmother and others had communal sub-

scriptions to magazines, with a rubber stamp of all their names, to be checked off when read.

Says one younger resident, "To me it has always been *my* neighborhood. I had aunts and grandparents here, and we find a lot of interaction with the older families." But a newcomer to the block, about the same age but with no family ties, has a different perspective: "The people are lovely, but it seems very . . . private." One of the Love family sees this privacy as generated, if not by the newcomers, then by a new social order: "The neighborliness is not what it used to be at all—the young people who both have jobs, everyone's so *busy* now."

If whist games and the Big Cinch are things of the past, there are other things that endure and unify Portland and Westmoreland Places. To everyone, the rest of the city is "outside the gates," not as in a fortress, but with the snug feeling of a safe and protected community. There is the distincitive tan pebble surfacing specified by the Trustees for the roads, which gives them a softer, more rural air than the asphalt outside. There is the greengrocer who comes by twice a week in his truck—an archaic and precious civility. One woman, recently moved in from the suburbs, is particularly grateful to see a milkman again—with the glass bottles that she remembers from her childhood. And the horseback riding—husband and wife in the morning, children in the afternoon, and businessmen at the end of the day—give the Places a pastoral counterpoint to their essentially urban character.

Above all, there is a feeling of wealth beyond the individual opulence of a few houses. It is a sense of "that union of house and garden essential to the art of living rightly," as S.L. Sherer wrote in an article featuring Portland and Westmoreland Places in House & Garden in 1904, "a factor that adds immeasurably to the attractiveness of a city." The private place "imparts a measure of privacy to home life that is highly desirable in these days of glaring publicity and . . . encourages the building of houses of a higher standard of architecutral excellence and thus makes for a well-ordered city and a better life." □

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THE GARDENER AS COMPOSER

Musings of an opinionated garden writer

By Beverley Nichols



A great Copper beech is the centerpiece of the garden at Sudbrook Cottage, Ham Common, in Surrey

Mine is the garden of a frustrated composer. Although I have written 70 books on most of the subjects under the sun my deepest emotions, since early childhood, have always been felt in terms of music. But it would need yet another book, and probably a very boring one, to explain why the music has never emerged.

How is this illustrated by the garden, on which I have now been working for over 20 years? Very clearly, if you have an ear for music and an eye for form.

Firstly, it has what may be called a "melodic line." This means that the main "theme" of the garden is developed, in a series of curves, from the moment you step through the garden gate, and culminates, as in the center section of a musical romance, in the water garden.

Secondly, and still musically, this water garden sets the key and dictates the rhythm of the whole design. One of my most obstinately held convictions is that a sheet of water in a garden is not merely a luxury but a necessity. It need not be extensive (my own is merely a circular lily pond about 20 feet in diameter, constructed from weathered bricks) but it is essential. Water gives a garden a fourth dimension. It is like a mirror in a room. And it has a mystical quality, reflecting the sky and bringing the heavens down to earth.

Thirdly, there are no straight lines in the garden, just as there are no straight lines in Nature or in music. True, it might be argued that a Bach fugue or a Mozart sonata had "straight lines," and that a formal garden adjoining an 18th-century house could be fashioned with these composers in mind. Perhaps it could, but I doubt whether the experiment would be successful.

Fourthly, just as the water, the paths, and the beds dictate the melodic line, so the "harmonization" is provided by the trees and the larger shrubs. The metaphor may be fanciful but it is also factual, as I should hope to prove to you if we were to walk round the garden together—particularly on a stormy day in October, when the wind was sweeping through the branches of the great Copper Beech.

Now for some details that distinguish my garden from the great majority of gardens in this country (by "distinguish" I don't mean to suggest that the design is nearer to perfection—merely that it is different).

The most important distinction is seen in the fact that there are no bush roses, none of the common Hybrid Teas which appear to be so beloved by the average gardener.

Roses, of course, there are in abundance, but these are confined to the walls. But bush roses, no. When they are not flowering, which means for the greater part of the year, they are an offense to the eye, meticulously pruned and shaped in a style that bears no relation to anything in Nature. They are hospital cases, from which the eye revolts. Perhaps the most distressing are those roses in which flowers of red and yellow are born from the same root.

If I had a larger garden I should grow the old- *(Continued on page 178)*

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"Water gives a garden a fourth dimension. It is like a mirror in a room... reflecting the sky and bringing the heavens down to earth"

(Continued from page 176) fashioned roses beloved of Constance Spry. As it is I have to be content with one variety—the white single *R. filipes* 'Kiftsgate' which is planted all along the outer wall facing Ham Common. In July it breaks into a wave of foaming blossom, so spectacular that it draws the crowds.

One of the characteristics of my garden is that it is a "garden for all seasons." I could not endure a garden that was—as it were—put under dust sheets for a third of the year. Hence my passion for winter flowers. I am writing in late January, when most of the gardens in our country are lifeless. But from the window of my study I can see torrents of blossom from the Winter Cherry *(Prunus subhirtella* 'Autumnalis'). Along the outer wall there is a broad band of *Iris unguicularis* from which I have already gathered several bowls of pale blue blossom. Under the Copper Beech in the main garden there are splashes of Winter Aconite *(Eranthis hyemalis)* as bright as summer buttercups, and clusters of deep blue *Iris reticulata* mingling with the snowdrops. One of my tree heathers *(Erica arborea)* has grown to a height of 10 feet, and is already trembling into blossom, and all the winter heathers *(Erica carnea)* are showing color, undeterred by a recent snowfall. Perhaps the most spectacular shrub in the garden is a *Mahonia* 'Charity' with its long weeping clusters of palest yellow, which are serenely unaffected by the hardest frosts, as are the delicate blooms of the Cornelian Cherry *(Cornus mas)*. Hellebores are to be found in abundance—not only the familiar Christmas Roses *(Helleborus niger)* but many others, varying from the greenish white *H. olympicus* to the dark crimson *H. colchicus*.

If you share my love of winter flowers and if you are too impatient to wait until daffodils "take the winds of March with beauty," I have one variety of daffodil that makes a much earlier debut. It is called "February Gold," and it always lives up to its name.

In spite of the wide variety of plants and trees, which give the garden a modest botanical interest, the whole thing is maintained in impeccable condition with an absolute minimum of labor. My only professional help is provided by one man who comes for three hours on Saturday mornings. There is nothing to distinguish him from the average gardening "help" except that he happens to be a genius with a very wide botanical knowledge. He also happens to be endowed with a demonic energy that enables him to climb walls at a record speed and dig beds like a robot. No bribe would be enough to persuade me to print his name and address.

I am also lucky in having a number of ladies who must be described as



Beverley Nichols in his garden

"fans." They come along because they have read my gardening books, liked them, and decided that they wish to play a part in them. With most of them I am only acquainted—as it were—from the rear, because as soon as they step through the garden gate they bend down and start pulling up weeds.

Nor must I forget a friend who shares the cottage with me and makes himself responsible for mowing the lawns. Apart from this somewhat motley band of helpers, I have to rely on myself. And since, at my time of life, I have a limited stock of energy, and can only manage the edging and the numerous fiddly bits which nobody else will undertake, such as dead-heading the rhododendrons, the garden is, by necessity, an "old man's garden." But I don't think it is any the worse for that.

By an "old man's garden" I do not mean a garden that is unimaginative or one in which there are no experiments or innovations. I mean a garden in which every possible advantage is taken of labor-saving devices. And since in these days "labor" is scarce, lazy, capricious, and absurdly expensive, every sensible person's garden must be to some extent an "old man's garden."

This means—to take an outstanding example—that we must all make ourselves familiar with the intelligent use of *ground cover*. A book could be written on this section alone, but I will confine myself to two examples of the ground cover which I use myself. Perhaps the most invaluable allies are to be provided by the large family of the lamiums (which have been developed from dead nettles), in particular *Lamium maculatum,* which spreads a silver carpet in spring, through which no weeds can penetrate. It is beautiful in its own right, bearing two crops of pale pink flowers which form an exquisite foil to the silver leaves. A close second is to be found in the various periwinkles that flourish in the deepest shade, not only the blue *Vinca major* but a host of its more aristocratic relations in shades of mauve and purple.

But here we must give a word of warning. Once your lamiums and vincas have established themselves they have an alarming habit of making more and more outrageous territorial demands, even to the extent of tunneling under concrete pavements. This is one of the few occasions when I allow the use of weed-killer in my garden, which is otherwise kept in order by blood, tears, toil and sweat. And, of course, by love, which is the most magical fertilizer of them all. □

Beverley Nichols published his first novel at the age of 19, and has since written some 70 volumes, of which the most famous is Down the Garden Path.

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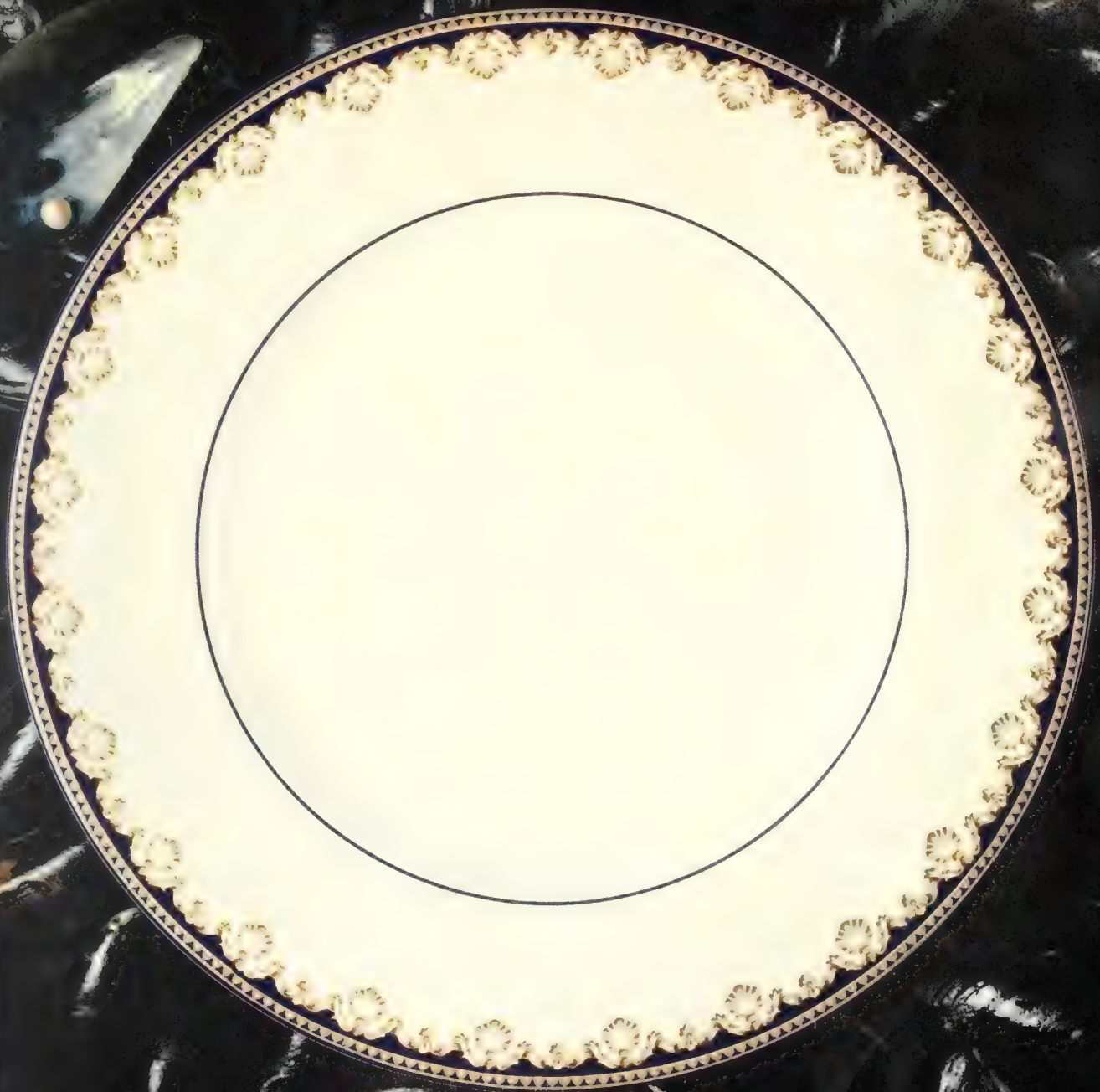
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COVER
A French Empire caryatid mirror is flanked by a pair of 18th-century English Sheffield candlesticks in the Larkin house, Monterey, California
Story on page 106
Photograph by Charles White

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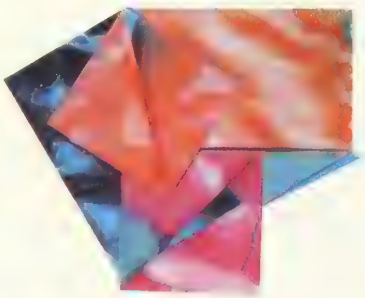
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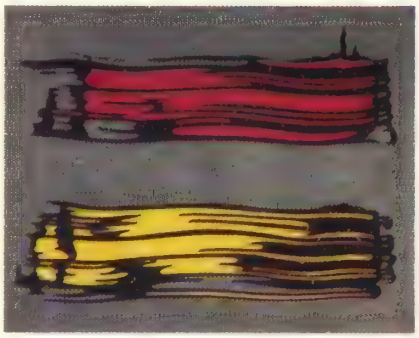


MATERIAL PLEASURES

A look at some contemporary artists who explore, comment on, and celebrate in their work the materials they work with

By Lee Hall







Top to bottom: Dorothea Rockburne, *Seraphim: Fire,* 1982. Roy Lichtenstein, *Red and Yellow Brushstrokes,* 1966. Christo, *Packed Table,* 1962.

I watched a great brutish yellow tomcat, only slightly hidden by shadows from a nearby tree, sit atop a garden fence and covet gluttonously a red painted cast-stone cardinal adorning a birdbath. As he watched, his attention precisely and wholly nailed to the ersatz bird, he gathered his bodily tensions like armor around himself. He shifted his shoulders, he narrowed and then widened his eyes. The bird was in focus. Coiled and hair-trigger tensed, he sprang.

Impact with the unyielding prey dashed the yellow tom to the ground. Dazed and shaking his head, he stood up. Neither foolishness nor embarrassment, however, long fouled his dignity. Tail flagging high in the air, a great yellow emperor, he soon strode again to the fence and climbed it. There, crouching again, he repeated the drama of anticipation, desire, action, and failure.

I don't know how long his desire withstood the resistance of stone. I know only that he wanted. He gave himself totally to wanting. And he knew exactly what he wanted. A cat, I suppose, has his own criteria for pleasure. And I have mine.

Pleasure, whatever its stimulation or source, must engage my senses, first of all, in more than a warm psychic bath. But sensual it must be, at least initially, for how else would I experience it?

I have still more requirements for a pleasure-giving object or event. It must generate in me energy, excitement, a sense of anticipation and desire to continue the encounter. It must not wear out or fade or let itself be known too quickly, but it must beguile me with a degree of mystery, an apparent reluctance to yield up too easily its essence.

Life holds many possibilities for pleasure and, through pleasure, for increased knowledge and richness in being alive. Thank God. Out of habit or early training, as artist or audience, I seek pleasure from art. I need it with the same intensity that I need faith.

Shouldn't pleasure be to art, finally, what faith is to religion? Basic. Essential. Given. The genesis of understanding and belief and experience. This does not mean, I know, that either real faith or real pleasure is immediate, cheap, or easily claimed.

But liturgics cannot replace worship, a sense of religious awe, or a personal communion with the central powers of the universe. Faith is required. Similarly, no amount of erudition, or collected second-hand data, or criticism however adroit, or of sincere wanting can dish up art if the object doesn't engage your attention through pleasure promised and pleasure granted.

If I, like the bloody-minded cat, put my energies in gear, burn the guidebooks and maps and most of the written criticism of art, might I leap free and seize the treasure, the real thing? Of course, I may pounce greedily and find that I've bitten into fool's gold. But if I'm more fortunate than the cat I'll meet the material I anticipate and it will give pleasure.

Thus, I take heart in recognizing that there are artists who, despite the critical pap that obscures their work, take and give pleasure in working materials into form. While individual in style and idea, these artists share a determination to reexamine material as a subject and to wrest authenticity from the material chosen. They, by the materials they select and the means by which they form those materials, call my attention *(Continued on page 8)*

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Nancy Graves, *Acordia,* Private Collection

(Continued from page 6) to fabric, glass, paint, paper, or metal. They subject material to the force of their minds and talents to provide the myths and symbols that we have asked of art in the past. Material becomes the substance of pleasure and of meaning in their works.

Roy Lichtenstein, Christo, Dorothea Rockburne, Nancy Graves, James Houston, and Dale Chihuly are different human beings and very different artists. Each, in his own passionate way, confronts his chosen material with intensity and a sense of search. Each, in his individual way, extracts from the process of working with a material a plausible form, a work of art. Some make new art from old ideas by altering a familiar substance, by calling attention to the process or technique of manipulating the material and, thereby, emphasizing what is made.

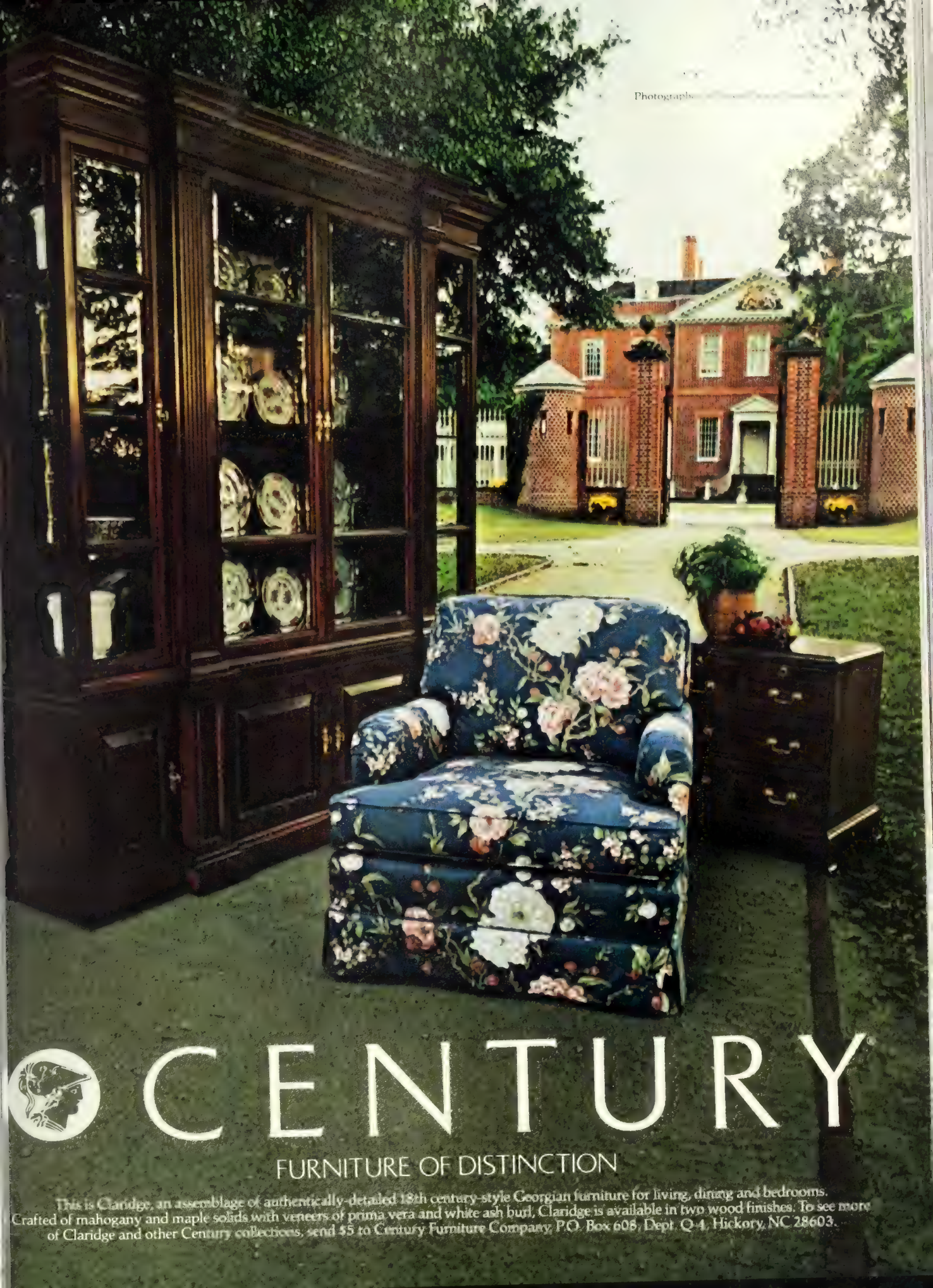
Roy Lichtenstein, identified as a Pop artist, makes puns about familiar images as he paints such works as *Red and Yellow Brush Strokes* into witty remarks on the emblematic abstract-expressionist gesture of paint in action. In making the painting, Lichtenstein comments on the nature of paint and, specifically, on our familiarity with the look of paint moving from the brush of an abstract-expressionist painter. But he also uses the material as a statement about both abstract expressionism and the earlier and presumably comfortable acceptance of verisimilitude as the critical measure of achievement in art. He takes me round a circle. He de-materializes the paint by treating the brush stroke as image; then he pokes fun at the image by alluding to illusion; and, finally, he calls my attention to the means by which he painted the picture. I smile in the presence of entertaining, witty, intellectually stimulating company. We'll see each other again.

Nancy Graves uses traditional metals and patinas to make fanciful and often highly personal sculpture derived from the natural forms of seed pods, stalks, and other bits of flora. She combines colors and shapes inherent in the metals and patinas selected and sometimes emphasizes specific areas or passages of a piece by painting the surface. Graves constructs her garden of delights cheerfully and intelligently because she is at ease with the metals she uses. She sweeps new pleasures into shape.

Christo, once a shocking artist and always a very potent one, cloaks an actual and familiar object such as a wheelbarrow or a museum building. In my everyday life, I don't expect buildings or wheelbarrows to be wrapped lumpily and entwined with cords, to be recognizable even though obscured by an intervening material. Christo involves materials, both those wrapped and those used in wrapping. He thereby freshens my attention to form and object, to the idea of shape, and ultimately, to the new personage he packages. What might appear to be Christo's personal caprice or social high jinks reveals in actuality something vital about the nature of material and of things. Thus he makes an idea of the object itself. Of course, it's amusing stuff. Of course, it's great jokey fun. But Christo's treatment of material provides a long-lived intellectual and sensual pleasure.

Dorothea Rockburne, too, employs the sensual aspects of fine-quality water-color pigments and translucent paper to provide a new experience with the materials, a new object that is not strictly either painting or *bas relief,* but, whatever else, is not ordinary watercolor painting on a flat, often inert, surface.

She soaks the paper with colors, sometimes layering colors over other color to *(Continued on page 12)*


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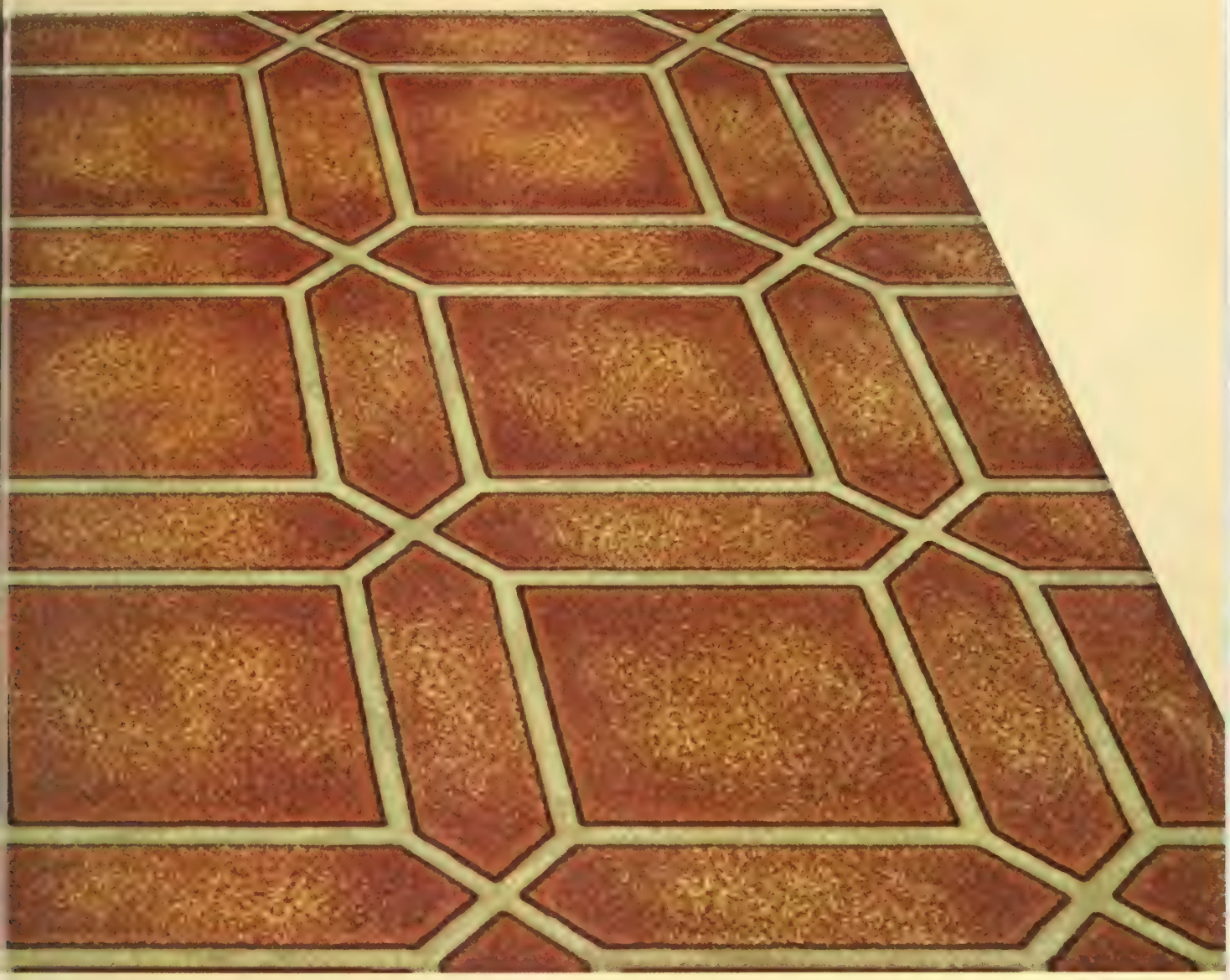
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(Continued from page 8) produce a high degree of luminosity. Then she folds the paper, layering still more color over color. Her works are the sum total of the treatment of materials, the result and the record simultaneously of placing films of color over films of color and of folding and reshaping flat paper so that color and paper are wed totally. Each work is itself, presented whole and complete. Each is a knowable presence on the wall. I move in close to savor the nuances of craft in Rockburne's work and I peer, face to face, at paper and paint joined, folded together into one material object. Materials can be shaped and directed in vastly different means by different artists and still be true to the nature of materials. Two artists or craftsworkers employing or experimenting with the same materials will find in their working decidedly different objects.

For instance, two masters of modern glass, Dale Chihuly and James Houston, work in markedly different styles. Both work with glass. Both reach into the nature of glass to extract form and idea, to claim image.

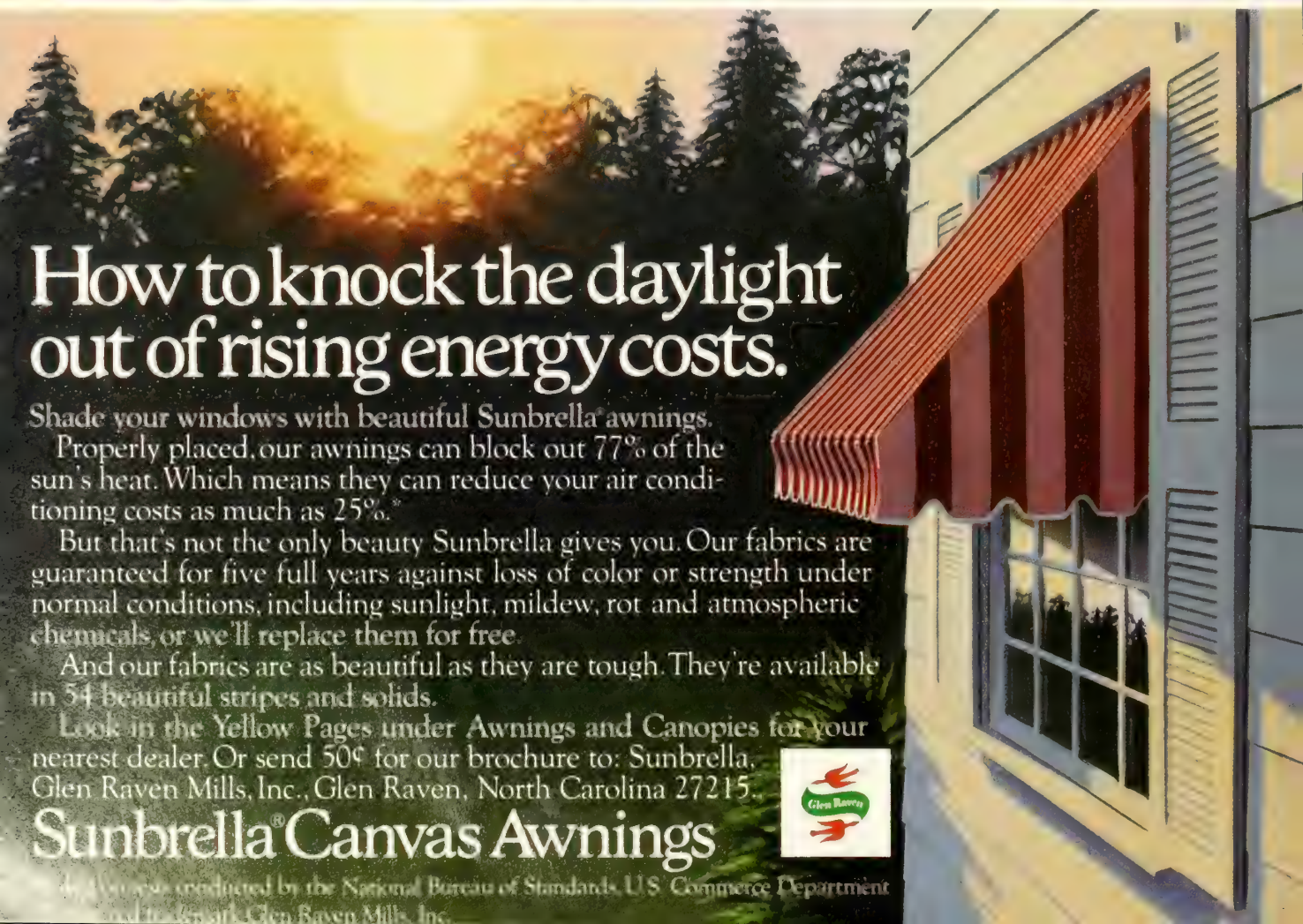
Houston finds in glass the images that reflect truthfully his adventures and observations among Eskimos he loves and knows well. Although those images, those treatments of Eskimo life provide a powerful reference point in looking at Houston's work, I return to the nature of the material itself, to a direct look at crystal. However coolly suggestive to the eye and hand of ice, Houston's work is in and with glass. To fail to see glass, finally, would be to fail to see his work.

Dale Chihuly often works serially, producing clusters of glass objects that refer to cylinders, baskets, and shells. His reference to familiar and natural objects, like the initial references of Houston, Christo, or Lichtenstein, merely provides the point from which he can set himself free to experiment with his chosen material.

Chihuly works with molten viscous glass. As he blows glass into shape, color intercepts color and lyrical lilting forms appear. He catches and fixes the object in the cooling glass. He seizes the object of the moment. He selects one thing from infinite possibilities.

While materials do not offer *the* key to understanding contemporary—or any other—art, they do offer *a* key. They are the initial clue. The first cause. The basic stuff. They are the opportunity for honesty that an artist claims. And, as a parallel, they are the first level of sensation available to the viewer. In the process of looking closely at the identifying materials, of letting my senses run free and empathetically into the materials, I grow in my skills of perception. I do not expect maps or names; I do expect authentic experience. I hope for joy as well.

And I begin merely by asking honestly: Of what are you made? □



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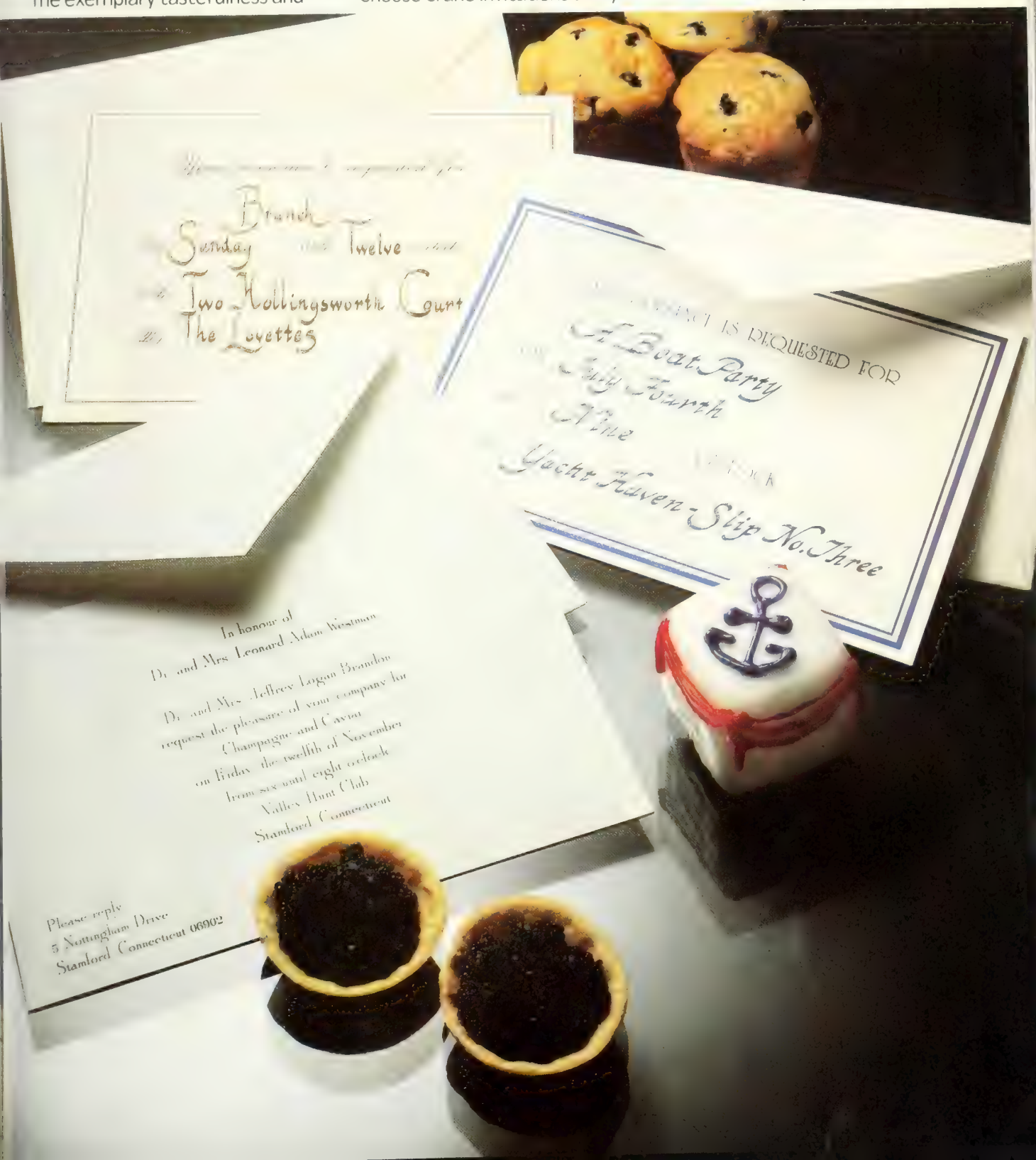
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L.A. RICHES FROM A RAGTOP

Two Englishmen catch the
city's best eccentricities at a side glance
By Alexander Cockburn



Rolling up Central Park West the winter squall slapped into my sitting-room window like a wet sock, and I knew it was time to take a four-day weekend and flee New York for Los Angeles. A few days later, watching the evening sky thicken into the color of a bruised mango behind the palm trees of the Tropicana Motel, listening to Hercules Bellville describe the largest religious painting in the world, I knew how right I'd been. Transplanted from London to New York in 1973, I first went to Los Angeles in 1974. It's been my favorite city to escape to ever since.

You can tell a lot about Europeans from the American cities they like. Visitors who secretly hate America *tout court* pretend to like Boston and San Francisco, offering them as tasteful reproaches to the vaster, gamier conurbations of New York and Los Angeles. But the puzzling thing is how many Americans affect astonishment at the notion that one might want to visit Los Angeles for reasons other than making money.



Top: A favorite Pop icon, Buena Park, 1966. *Above:* Alexander Cockburn and Hercules Bellville (rear) with a pink '67 Mustang across from Robert Derrah's Coca-Cola bottling plant of 1936–37.

At first I took this to be a form of premonitory politeness, with my friends uncertain that a European could possibly like so quintessentially an American city. But over the years I've come to realize that Los Angeles, factory of myth, is itself the victim of a myth—that it uniquely combines all the disadvantages of 20th-century civilization.

"You mean you actually *like* Los Angeles?" Americans ask me peevishly, as though I were teasing them with a foolish paradox. They dwell upon the car-clogged *(Continued on page 22)*


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(Continued from page 18) freeways and the smog: "What is there to look at?" I lecture them on the Craftsman triumphs of Greene and Greene and on the beauties of the Gamble House in Pasadena; I advert to the Art Deco magnificence of Bullocks Wilshire, early and most resplendent homage to the drive-in department store; I hymn the pool tables and ribald cheer of Barney's Beanery; I invoke the fantasy homes of Hancock Park; I tell them I get more sense of the culture from Blair's tearoom or from the six-palm silhouette against the Carnation Building than I do from the whole of midtown New York. A little light goes on behind their eyes. I enter their mental catalogue as Euro-tourist, connoisseur of the whimsical and the perverse. They start talking about Evelyn Waugh and *The Loved One,* Nathanael West and *The Day of the Locust.*

Now you cannot truly enjoy Los Angeles without a sense of irony mixed in with a necessary enthusiasm for Art Deco and Streamline Moderne. We go to Forest Lawn in Glendale to marvel at Jan Styka's *The Crucifixion,* not because it is beautiful but because it is there, at 195 by 45 feet "the largest religious painting in the world." Ironic appreciation deepens as one exits through the Forest Lawn museum and perceives that prominent among the exhibits are specimens of every coin mentioned in the Bible.

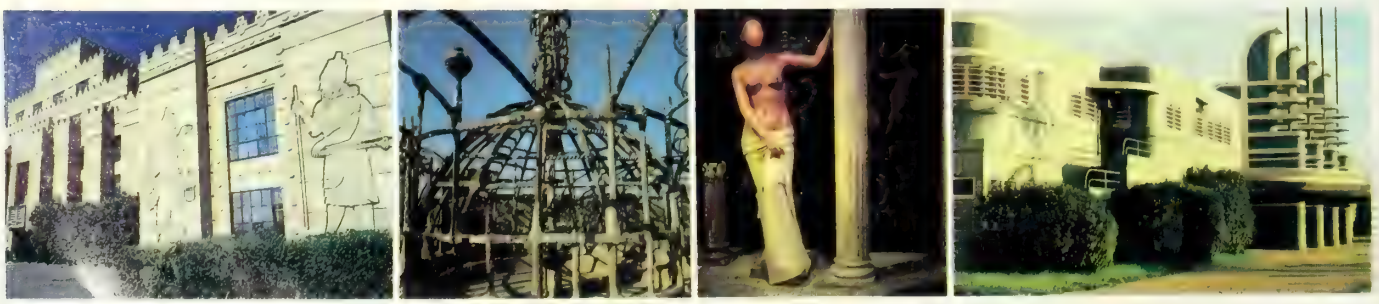
But to see Los Angeles merely as urban and spiritual Grand Guignol in the Waugh/West manner is to miss the point of the place, rather as if one were to drive along its splendid freeway system with the sole intention of finding a traffic jam. Sooner or later there will be a jam and sooner or later there will be a slice of Grand Guignol. Both are only moments in a space-timescape that is best appreciated as a subtle, endlessly varied series of moments that demand a kind of carefree concentration as they slide past the eye through the car window: a building, a billboard, a strip of neon, a palm tree.

But if Evelyn Waugh, a snob of Ozymandian proportions, symbolizes those high-art *Guide Bleu* Europeans far too guarded to like L.A., there is another sort of Englishman who feels an instinctive sympathy for the place, perhaps because it is as unlike England as it is possible to be. In 1971 Reyner Banham published his dazzling appreciation of the dream zone and its mountains, plains, beaches, and freeways in *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies.* Banham's point was that the city's supposed vices, the lack of a "center," the primacy of the automobile are signposts to its virtues. Despite such encouragement Angelenos prattle on ceaselessly about the long-awaited renaissance of a proper, central "downtown." They give the city the air of an aging courtesan at last throwing aside the sequins and seizing up a shawl. As the 1984 Olympics and expected tourist influx loom over the horizon, there are other unwelcome signs that Los Angeles is beginning to think of itself as a "proper" city, instead of as an enchanting amalgam of commercial boosterism, architectural invention, programmatic fantasy, and the culture of the automobile and the beach.

Despite excellent guides such as Banham, or Gebhard and Winter's *A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles & Southern California* or Paul Gleye's *The Architecture of Los Angeles* or even Richard Saul Wurman's efficient *LA/Access,* it is really impossible to learn from books how to "read" L.A. You need someone of sympathetic taste who can, to put it in a Hollywood idiom, "produce and direct" the town and your relationship to it, someone who knows that there is a time to look at Rembrandts in the Getty Museum and a time to admire the custom western wear at Nudie's over in the Valley.

Los Angeles has its fabled connoisseurs. Somewhere in my address book is the name of a man with unrivaled knowledge of the miniature golf courses of Orange County. One day I will confer with this scholar-geographer, but in the meantime—for the last five years or so—I have had, as impresario of Los Angeles, another Englishman in the form of film producer Hercules Bellville, whose impetuous stride, elegant diction, and '60s convertible Cadillac have introduced so many of his wide circle of friends to the city's charms.

Los Angeles is the temple of auto culture and as an idler rather than commuter it is meet to put one's best wheels forward. Hercules' venerable yellow Cadillac is now owned by the actress Rachel Ward and is in semiretirement so, in the warm sunshine of a California winter, we are making our way southeast across Los Angeles in a convertible pink '67 Mustang; convertible, because many of the interesting sights in L.A. were designed to be spotted in a side glance from a moving car and the spotting process is helped along if one doesn't have to stick one's head out the *(Continued on page 24)*



Samson Tyre and Rubber Co. building, 1929, by Morgan, Walls & Clements; Watts Towers by Simon Rodia; Venus de Milo, Palace of Living Art, 1966; Pan-Pacific Auditorium, 1935, by Walter Wurdeman and Welton Becket.



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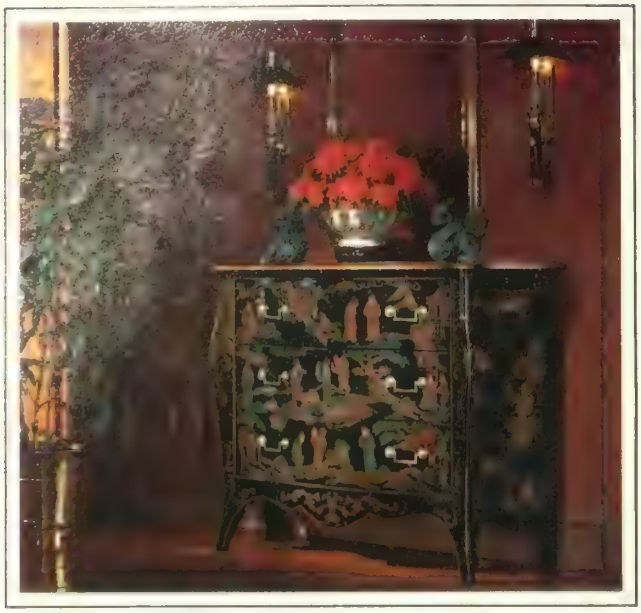
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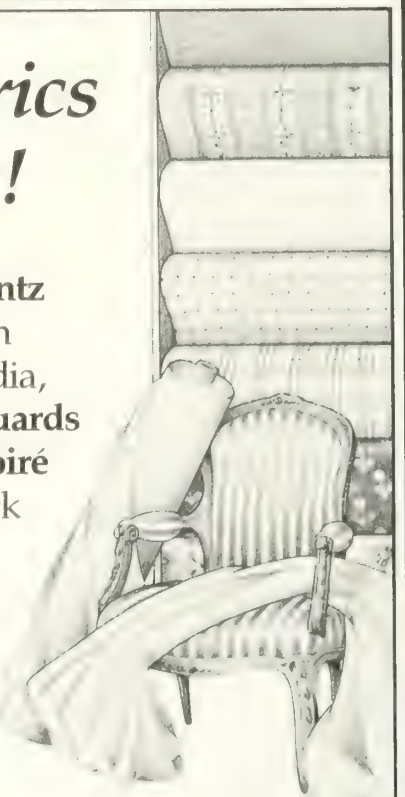
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(Continued from page 22) window to look at a Deco bas relief 30 feet up while trying to steer at the same time; pink and 16 years old because that is the way the amiable David Schwartz of Rent-A-Wreck likes his Mustangs. If Henry Ford had founded his business in West L.A. rather than Detroit he might have painted the Model T pink, too.

For the first day of my visit Hercules has assembled a demanding schedule, devoted to some of the area's remoter attractions. Noting on our left, over the edge of the Santa Ana Freeway, the Assyrian façade of the Samson Tyre and Rubber Company building, we speed toward Philip Johnson's mirrored masterpiece, the Crystal Cathedral, in Garden Grove. En route we stop off to revisit an old favorite, the Palace of Living Art, attached to the Movieland Wax Museum in Buena Park. Here were three-dimensional wax tableaux of noted iconic moments in the history of art: *The Last Supper;* the *Mona Lisa* complete with Leonardo, model, and painting on easel; a Montmartre street scene containing Toulouse-Lautrec and cancan dancers; the Crucifixion; Don Quixote and Sancho Panza ("The horse and mule are masterpieces of taxidermy made in Spain.").

We are doomed to crushing disappointment. The Bally Corporation has recently taken over the Six Flags Corporation and with it the Palace and Wax Museum. In an act of cultural barbarism surely unrivaled since the bombing of Würzburg or the sack of the summer palace in Peking after the Boxer Rebellion, Bally has put the waxen art masterpieces in storage and substituted an eighth-rate sequence of automated horror chambers. The girl in the ticket booth sympathizes with our outrage and confides that popular feeling against Bally has been running high. "It's not as though we had much in the way of culture in northern Orange County," she adds sadly. It is her hope that public outcry will force Bally to bring the living art back from the warehouse to its former station.

By way of compensation the wax museum of film stars, around which we dutifully plod, offers us an *echt* L.A. moment. One room is given over to the cabin of the starship *Enterprise* and to Star Trek notables including Mr. Spock, Captain Kirk, and Dr. McCoy.

Peering at the tableau we espy two Dr. McCoys. Suddenly one of them moves. The wax set has temporarily become real and the actor DeForrest Kelley, dressed once more in Doc McCoy's blue space vest, is standing beside his simulacrum, videotaping a TV special.

Thus braced we head down the road to the Crystal Cathedral, commissioned by the television preacher Dr. Robert Schuller and completed in 1980. You can spot this extraordinary homage to Hi Tech from afar, since it is 415 feet long, 207 feet wide, and 128 feet high. Inside someone is practicing on one of the largest organs in the world. Great doors stand ready to swing open and display Dr. Schuller to 1,400 extra drive-in worshipers in the parking lot outside.

A few minutes away is Disneyland and we pay quick homage by taking the subterranean "Pirates of the Caribbean" ride before swinging back up the coast to Long Beach and the permanently anchored epitome of the early '30s Deco baroque, the *Queen Mary*. After toasting the rich red glories of the Observation Cocktail Lounge we head back to Hollywood for supper at Musso and Frank.

Hercules adroitly varies the menu and gives over the next day to Pasadena. Past Heritage Square we speed, noting a Queen Anne house imported *in toto* and still in its cellophane wrapping paper. From the Norton Simon Museum with its incomparable Vuillard and Zurbaran we head on to Charles and Henry Greene's Gamble House and on again to the Huntington Botanical Gardens with that exhilarating and immense collection of cacti and succulents.



The Aztec Hotel, 1925, by Robert Stacy-Judd: Pre-Columbian Revival in Monrovia.

We take supper in the Victoria Station next to Universal Studios. Above me hangs the original timetable board from London, beneath which I used to snivel as I returned to prep school 30 years ago.

Los Angeles, under Hercules' direction, begins to sort itself into themes, references to be picked up from day to day. The memory of the wax David in Buena Park gives way to the marble copy of Michelangelo's *David* in Forest Lawn. The very fine Bouguereau in the Getty Museum in Malibu *(Young Girl Defending Herself Against Eros)* is complemented by a lesser known Bouguereau *(Song of the Angels)* hanging, ill-lit, in the Church of the Recessional Chapel, also in Forest Lawn. The *Queen Mary* is picked up in the streamline magnificence of Robert Derrah's ship-on-land, the Coca-Cola bottling plant in downtown L.A., and his Crossroads of the World complex on Sunset Boulevard. A few blocks south of Crossroads is another streamline glory, in the form of the Pan-Pacific Auditorium, now sadly run down. From the Auditorium it's on to Bullocks Wilshire, Deco-style department store *par excellence,* with Herman Sachs's ceiling mural in the porte cochère, *The Spirit of Transportation.* On downtown we go, from the Central Library to the Bradbury Building to the Grand Central Market, and finally halt in Union Station, the last great passenger terminal built in America, right at the end of the railway age, in 1939.

Spanish Revival crossed with Moorish and Moderne, the station is another cathedral with soft light bathing the magnificent thrones offered waiting travelers in those comfortable times. We have much still to see: Rodia's Watts Towers, Grandma Prisbrey's Bottle Village at Simi Valley, Marilyn Monroe's grave in Westwood Memorial, Frank Lloyd Wright's Mayan block Ennis house up in the hills. Hercules was irritable at my sloth but it seemed proper to dally in Union Station, for it sums up so much of the joy of Los Angeles: space, complex yet harmonious architectural antecedents, and all the optimism of a world on the move. □

Alexander Cockburn writes for The Village Voice, The Wall Street Journal, *and* The New York Review of Books.



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PRESIDIO TERRACE

A rich *cioppino* of architectural styles from Pueblo to Japanese gives a cosmopolitan flavor to this private cul-de-sac in San Francisco

By Christopher Gray

For the most part the city plan of San Francisco is an unremarkable grid laid over a spectacular collection of hills. There are a few exceptions, such as the great diagonal of Market Street and the oddly crooked block of Lombard Street, but the design of residential districts in the city before the 1906 earthquake represents a great lost opportunity—except for the cul-de-sac known as Presidio Terrace.

Thirty-six houses, ranging from Japanese bungalows to Edwardian mansions, line this private circular street adjacent to the Presidio military reservation. In plan the street is a chubby doughnut with 10 lots in a center island and 30 on the outside; the backs of the outer houses are protected by walls and fences, and the only entrances to the Terrace are a small path to one side and the main gates at Arguello Boulevard. Assessments are made to each lot owner to cover repair of the street and streetlights, a private security service, and plantings in the five small islands and parking strips. Every year the gates are closed for a day to protect the title, and the recent custom is to have the children of the Terrace open and close them for those who wish to pass.

Laid out in 1905, Presidio Terrace occupied the last large, undeveloped parcel easily accessible to the cable car lines and downtown. A syndicate headed by Antoine Borel, member of a family prominent in California affairs since the 1860s and even to this day, assembled the 400,000-square-foot plot from various owners, including Phoebe A. Hearst, mother of William Randolph Hearst. The firm of Baldwin and Howell, which had worked with Borel on previous development projects in San Mateo, was hired as real-estate agent.





Presidio Terrace, shown at top in the original offering brochure, was carved out of the last vacant land near downtown San Francisco in 1905.

The actual designer of the Terrace is not known, but it is apparent that Baldwin and Howell were responsible for the general concept of the private street, both to draw people out to what was then near the end of town, and to make up for views inferior to those in Pacific Heights, whose grand mansions looked toward the Golden Gate. Neither Borel nor Howell lived in the Terrace, but Archibald S. Baldwin (a Virginia émigré) built the first house there, number 2, completed in 1905, and the architect, Frank Van Trees, may have designed the gates and even the plan itself. No sooner had Baldwin's Edwardian mansion and the Mission-style J. E. Merritt bungalow at number 13 gone up than the earthquake and fire struck in April of 1906. The damage to Baldwin's residence was light (although the cracked stucco façade was later replaced with brick), and the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, the Firemen's Fund Insurance Company, and even Baldwin and Howell temporarily relocated to various rooms in the house.

In its original state Presidio Terrace was a remarkable array of residential architecture. With a few exceptions, all the houses were designed in a distinctive West Coast idiom combining often disparate Mission, Shingle, Spanish Colonial, Norman, Tudor, and even New England clapboard elements. The Bay Shingle number 5, built in 1908 for Dr. *(Continued on page 28)*



1983 Estee Lauder, Inc. Photograph: Skrebneski Gown: Frank Tignino Jewelry: Carimati



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(Continued from page 26) Hartland Law (whose $4 million Fairmont Hotel was gutted by the 1906 fire just after completion) has the best example of the use of clinkers—burnt brick common to the Bay style—on the Terrace. Number 9 has remarkable molded "adobe" chimney tops, and number 10 carries a great brick arch. A few houses, like the New England clapboard at number 16 or the Newport *palazzo* at number 34, would be quite at home in the Midwest or East, but the rest of the houses are distinctly Western: from the hulking, almost medieval number 30, home of contractor Fernando Nelson, often misidentified as the Terrace's developer, to the explicitly Pueblo number 19.

The original landscaping of the Terrace, designed in equal balance with the roadway and the architecture, was elaborate. Parking strips had large shrubs, flowers, and English hawthornes, and the five small islands were covered with palm, bamboo, and other tropical bushes. These islands are still more or less the same—except for the tall palm trees that were salvaged from the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition—but the parking strips have been reduced to distinctly suburban, no-nonsense grass plots with occasional flower beds. As a result, the landscape is comparatively bare, and the original buffer between architecture and roadway has been removed.

The early residents of the Terrace were not big San Francisco names like Crocker, Spreckels, or Flood, who built their showy palaces on Broadway or Pacific Avenue. Rather, the Terrace attracted "a whole different class of people," in the words of unofficial Presidio Terrace historian Jacqueline Young, who lives in the old Hartland Law House. "Some of the original owners were architects; Hale was of what is now the Carter-Hawley-Hale chain, Scheeline was a liquor merchant, Brown had some sort of hat business, Weinstock owned five or six department stores, Horst had a hops business in the valley. The people were substantial, but maybe a step down socially from those who built in Pacific Heights."

Unlike in some other American private streets, there is almost no remaining consciousness in the Terrace of the original families, architects, or build-

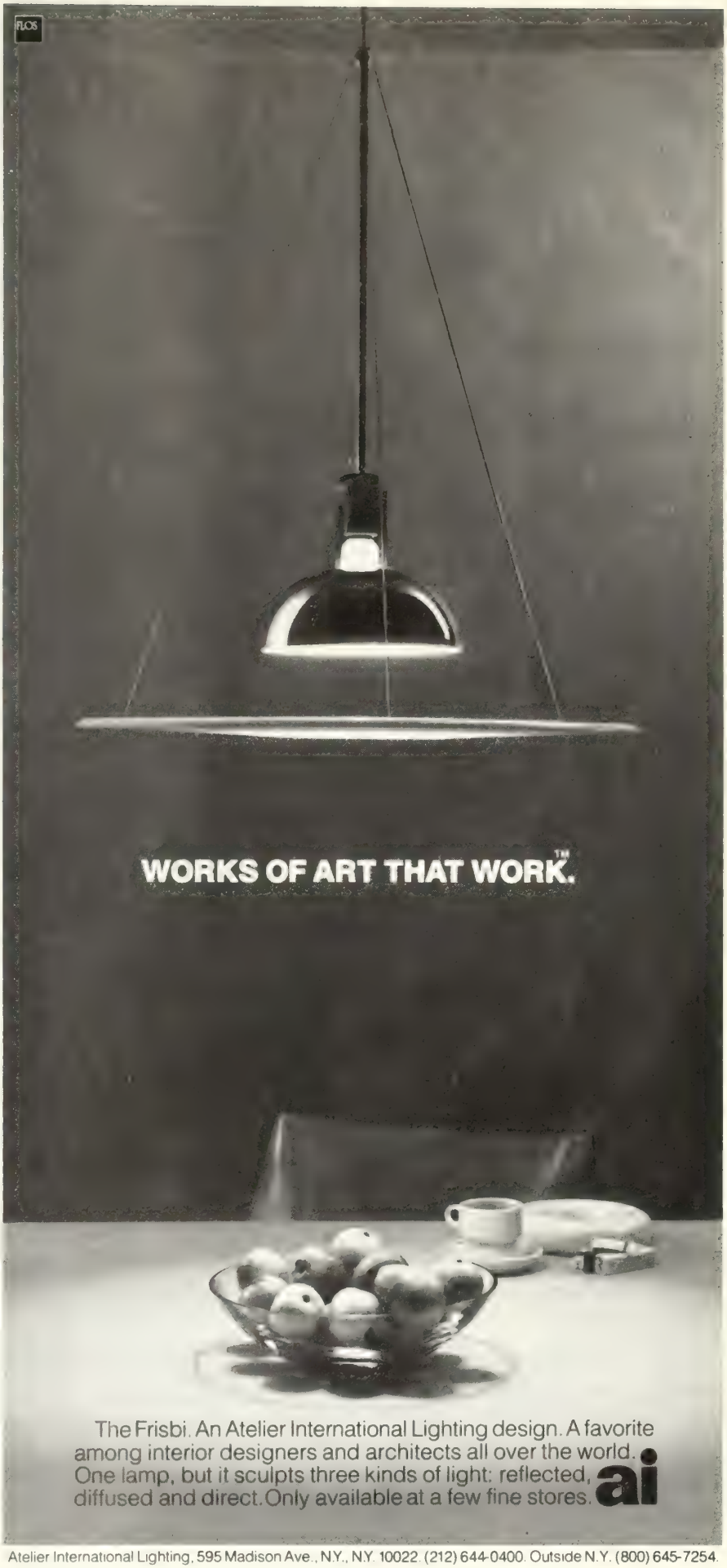


Palm trees were planted in 1915 and give the Terrace the air of Southern California.

ers. Lawyer Beatrice Kushner, connected with the Terrace since the 1940s, says, "When we moved in, there were a lot of older people still here, those who had built the houses. There was no real socializing; no one wanted to be coffee drinkers together like in the suburbs. You might use your neighbor as a club reference, but that would be it."

Jews and Christians co-existed on the Terrace from the beginning, though for a time the Christian presence may have been discouraged by the construction of Temple Emanu-El in 1925, whose distinguished Byzantine dome looms over the Terrace from its adjacent site, a point of reference from any spot on the street. By the 1930s, there was a strong Jewish presence on the Terrace, and subsequently the original restrictions against "Asians and Africans" were voided. There are now one black and four Oriental families on the Terrace, and it generally represents San Francisco's famous cosmopolitan character—an old-line, WASP-y fortress it is not.

In recent decades the Terrace has, through pure coincidence, become something of an enclave of regional political figures—the families of mayors Alioto and Feinstein have both lived here, as have Swigs, Sklars, Kaufmans, and Pelosis—all familiar names in the California political establishment. Nancy Pelosi, Chairman of the Democratic Party of California, calls Presidio Terrace a "haven" and recalls, "Just as we bought, *(Continued on page 30)*



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(Continued from page 29) there were other young families with children coming in and they developed a wonderful rapport. The older people here loved it, I think, because many of them had built their houses for their own families. And the Terrace was a great comfort to me; I always felt that when I was busy with political work the children didn't feel isolated, that they had a larger home than just our house."

Unlike the Pelosis, who did not seek out Presidio Terrace, writer Merla Zellerbach Goerner had always admired the Terrace from a distance: "I was born in San Francisco, lived here all my life, and whenever friends would visit, it was the place I would always take them to and say, 'This is the most beautiful street in the city.' Now, every time we drive in here, we think we are the luckiest people in the world."

If there is a flaw in Presidio Terrace, it is the residents' often careless stewardship of the showcase of California architecture they have inherited. One resident of nearly half a century says of the house styles on the Terrace, "They don't have the elegance of more Classical buildings, like the East. We all go back to the East for schools, for our culture"—an attitude of which local architectural historians despair. Although architectural controls are part of the property restrictions, enforcement has often been lax, and the complex, fragile character of some of the Terrace's finest buildings has been pointlessly altered, inside and out, as with the tragic alteration and overpainting of the delicate, double-roofed Japanese bungalow at number 24. Some residents, like Jacqueline Young, are working against this, and the showpiece of Presidio Terrace preservation is the Baldwin house, carefully maintained and restored over the many years by John Ritchie, who has even sought out the original Baldwin furnishings from the family.

Despite its alterations, Presidio Terrace remains one of the most desirable streets in San Francisco for the safety and security that only such an enclave can offer. As one resident puts it, "In San Francisco what is choice is to have a view. When we moved here we narrowed it down to two houses, one on Broadway in Pacific Heights with a stunning view of the Bay, and one here. For us, the decision was easy." □

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PUTTIN' ON THE GLITZ

The current vogue for ornament in architecture and interior design raises an important question: Is it a new style, or merely a trend?

By Rosemarie Haag Bletter



Center Artist Philip Maberry in his New York loft with Scott Walker. *Surrounding* Chinese-inspired motifs from *The Grammar of Ornament*

ORNAMENTALISM:
THE NEW DECORATIVENESS IN ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN
by Robert Jensen and Patricia Conway; Clarkson N. Potter, $40

THE GRAMMAR OF ORNAMENT
by Owen Jones; Van Nostrand Reinhold, $50

SOURCEBOOK OF ARCHITECTURAL ORNAMENT: DESIGNERS, CRAFTSMEN, MANUFACTURERS, AND DISTRIBUTORS OF EXTERIOR ARCHITECTURAL ORNAMENT
by Brent C. Brolin and Jean Richards; Van Nostrand Reinhold, $29.95

Consider an entertainer like Liberace, who, with his jewel-encrusted suits, his mirrored grand piano, and crystal candelabra creates the illusory environment of a fairy-tale palace. On the other hand consider Jerry Brown, who as governor of California spurned a new official mansion for the spartan simplicity of an apartment furnished like a monk's cell. Which of these extreme examples typifies our contemporary culture?

If we are to believe several recent books, we are moving closer to the baroque fantasy-land of Liberace. The current interest in ornament in architecture and interiors is in large part a reaction against the austerity of 20th-century main-line Modernism—especially as it came to be applied in American speculative office buildings, anonymous glass boxes that dot our urban landscape like so many packages without labels.

Ornamentalism by Robert Jensen and Patricia Conway tries to substitute the much-used but imprecise term "Post Modern" with a more positive, descriptive one. At the heart of what the authors regard as a new movement is an "awakening of a long-suppressed decorative impulse . . ." because "the urge to embellish and the love of ornamental effect are basic to human nature." The new lushness presumably allows us greater self-expression. The urge to ornament might not be part of mankind's *(Continued on page 34)*

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Left: Best Products Showroom, Oxford Valley, Pa., by Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown, 1979. *Center:* Tuscan House, Livermore, Calif., by Thomas Gordon Smith, 1979. *Right:* Best Products Showroom, Richmond, Va., by SITE, 1972.

(Continued from page 32) natural condition, however—one need only think of the severe forms of Mediterranean architecture or of the Southwestern Mission Style—but it is a fact that many people will respond enthusiastically to anything more sensuous than a whitewashed wall. *Ornamentalism* speaks eloquently to those disenfranchized pleasure-seekers.

The presence or lack of ornament was hardly an issue before the 20th century. Older publications on the subject usually were how-to books. A case in point is the reissued and sumptuous *The Grammar of Ornament* by Owen Jones of 1856. Jones admonished his readers that "Construction should be decorated. Decoration should never be purposely constructed." Its splendid color plates show characteristic wall decorations of various periods from Egyptian through Primitive. *The Grammar of Ornament* went through many editions, suggesting that it may have been used as a pattern book, despite Jones's explicit warning against outright copying.

Ornamentalism broaches a much broader subject: Decoration is used to define a "real movement . . . the essence of which is ornament." Jensen's explanation of what constitutes ornament is unusually wide-ranging. He includes such architectural features as columns that may or may not be structural, and the use of color, whether as pattern or simply as a large polychrome area. In this book ornament is regarded as almost *anything* except a plain surface. Even the Best Products showroom in Richmond, Virginia, by the architectural firm SITE, becomes an example of ornamentalism. The showroom has a "fake" façade in front of the structural one. It consists of a thin "peeling" layer of bricks curved outward away from the building, making it seem as if the wall is being pulled away from its backing. This device is a strong sculptural statement, but also a satirical comment about a business that appears to announce in a larger-than-life gesture that it has not been kept in good repair. The greater irony is, of course, that even though this would seem to be poor advertising, the curiosity value of this Best showroom has drawn it a great deal of attention. The building is at once delightful and disturbing. Nevertheless, we have to ask: Can an unembellished curving wall be called ornament?

The examples of decorated design in this book range from the highly serious to the sublimely ridiculous. The seminal work of the firm of Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown is shown alongside the faddy neo-'50s Punk loft of Phillip Maberry and Scott Walker. Somewhere in between are the houses of architect Thomas Gordon Smith: California bungalows painted in high-keyed, acidic, attention-grabbing colors with classically-inspired columns and moldings used both strategically and incongruously. These traditional motifs outline the building and emphasize the entry. Dividing the two-car garage is a Tuscan column, a feature we might expect in one of our older and more stately public buildings, not a bungalow. More than architectural wit, it is a self-conscious confrontation between the ordinary "dumbness" of the bungalow proper and the references to a "noble" tradition in the details.

The outstanding function of ornament is to embellish, to give pleasure to the eye. Not content with the aesthetic role of decoration, Jensen reminds us that ornament can have a number of practical end results. In place of the cliché about modern architecture, "form follows function," we can now say that "function follows form." Among the benefits enumerated here is that ornament can give a building human scale. While this is often the case, it is not a general principle guaranteed by the use of ornament. For instance, in Venturi's Best Products showroom in Oxford Valley, Pennsylvania, the huge flowers, exploded from the intimate scale of wallpaper, give little clue to the building's actual proportions. They go beyond the large Pop flowers by Andy Warhol—those could be tamely hung on a wall like any other picture—but here we have car-sized flowers staring at the cars in the parking lot, a standoff between man-made technology and man-made nature.

Jensen's general definition of this new "movement" keeps all options open: ornament can be flat or three-dimensional, but then he also writes that "Major public spaces are being designed almost as stage sets." The latter is surely closer to the truth. Compared to any earlier decoration, most of the new designs are basically flat: layers of flat architectural detail or patterned decoration are applied to flat walls. The crucial influence of the work of Robert Venturi's firm in this scenographic approach cannot be stressed enough.

Jensen re- *(Continued on page 36)*

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Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt, *Two Seconds Before the End of the World,* mixed-media installation, Neuberger Museum, 1979.

(Continued from page 34) minds us correctly that the reason why the early European Modernists abandoned ornament in the first place was that they had a social vision: the production of mass housing made possible by new technology. Handcrafted ornament would have made the architecture too expensive. When the forms of Modernism were adapted in America, they were transferred simply as a style without ornament, and the social reasoning was usually forgotten. Interestingly, Jensen writes that the smooth walls of the modern style do not always come cheap, because they require careful attention to detail, while ornament can be used to cover up rough joints. This is a startling realignment of conventional opinion. It hardly reflects the whole argument, however. Most ornament is still an expression of great luxury. As if to prove that ornament can still be had (for the right price), Brent C. Brolin's and Jean Richards's *Sourcebook of Architectural Ornament,* like the Yellow Pages, lists hundreds of firms specializing in the manufacture of ornament, supplying their addresses as well. The book is poorly illustrated, though it might be a useful handbook for architects and interior designers.

Even if it is easy to agree that there is much more ornament being executed today than 20 years ago, does this constitute a movement? Fragmentary and distorted allusions to older styles, characteristic of ornamentalism, can be found in the works of the Vienna Secession and in much of Art Deco design. And a rejection of functionalism and the machine is also not new in architecture, though the Young Turks of Post Modernism would like to have us think so. Le Corbusier, the most influ-

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ential of the early modern architects, reversed his own optimistic estimates of technology as early as the '30s and after World War II many younger architects, grouped under the label of New Brutalism, followed suit.

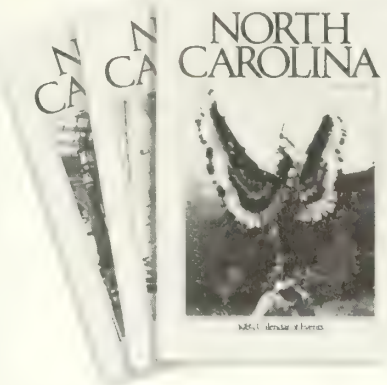
Be that as it may, the question remains: Does ornament alone define current tendencies? True, design today relies more heavily on fun-and-games play with history than did the comparatively staid historicism of earlier styles. Historical tricks, sham, and make-believe are rampant. While producing this architecture of illusion, the designer-magician is redundantly explaining his tricks, thereby disillusioning us. Aside from dazzling decorative devices, are there not also several equally important developments of spatial planning that characterize current architecture—such as an unusual planar layering of space, to mention only one—that are not touched on at all by *Ornamentalism?* It is at any rate unlikely that ornament alone, no matter how innovative its application, can be used to describe a new architecture.

The book's claim that "ornamentalism contains its own ideas about what things are and what things ought to be, about what is right and wrong with the 20th century" sounds soothing, but is a tall order to deliver. The book is more honest in telling us that ornamentalism is a "release from the burdensome realities of the present." In going back to examples of the Gilded Age some of these designs degenerate into blatant escapism.

Ornamentalism is in fact not a movement: It is, at best, an important trend. The legitimate experiments shown in the book's photographs are overwhelmed by a surfeit of the heavy-handed and the merely fashionable. It is as if our senses are being love-bombed into the 21st century. *Ornamentalism* cites the well-known Puritan formula of Modernism, "less is more," and contrasts it with Robert Venturi's response, "less is a bore." To this we may now safely add the motto, "more is not enough." □

Rosemarie Haag Bletter, associate professor of art history at Columbia University, is now at work on her book American Architecture Since 1945, *to be published by Oxford University Press.*

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ANTIQUES THAT LEAD A DOUBLE LIFE

Now collectors' prizes, 18th-century mechanical furniture harbored secrets, convenience, and an elaborate beauty

By Nancy Richardson

In our era, multipurpose furniture rarely attracts the attention of master craftsmen and almost never enters a "serious" room as decoration. Reclining chairs, drawing boards, reading tables that swivel, beds that crank up and down—most are necessities, offering little more than a bare-bones efficiency. It's been a long time since mechanical furniture had much glamour—as long ago in America, perhaps, as when Thomas Jefferson's charming domestic inventions were executed at Monticello with the help of an estate carpenter. Jefferson wanted furniture with a pleasing look that also did the job. And it was in 18th-century France that a similar desire signaled a long and delicious moment in the cabinetmaker's art, when an infant technology was mated with extraordinary craftsmanship to produce furniture that the current auction market prices like major works of art.

The heyday of mechanical furniture came in the second half of the 18th century, when smaller rooms were becoming fashionable and a feminine sense of comfort prevailed. Under the patronage of Mme. de Pompadour, cabinetmakers like Jean-François Oeben, who was also a skilled mechanic and maker of gilt-bronze mounts, began to devise some compact, elaborately fitted tables that could do a surprising variety of things with the touch of a spring. (Oeben was also known for marquetry strewn with flowers, ribbons, tassels—realizing in wood what was achieved in fashion with rich, pale materials under layers of embroidery and trim.)

A look at Boucher's pictures of Mme. de Pompadour—in which her mechanical furniture is portrayed as carefully as her features and dress—shows how she must have flourished in these newer, smaller rooms. At a multipurpose table for writing, reading, and eating, she sits doing all those things, her day punctuated by the delivery of letters and the penning of replies. Deception by one's mate, the treachery of friends, and the privileged spying of the king ensured that most communications were read by third and fourth parties—thus the genuine need for elaborate tables and desks with secret drawers.



Small mechanical reading and writing table with Sèvres porcelain plaques by Martin Carlin

It was the king, more than anyone, who required the conveniences of many drawers, multiple shelves, secret compartments, proper lighting, storage for writing equipment, a secret safe—in fact, a giant safety deposit box for the affairs of state and of the heart—which looked wonderful, was suitably monumental, and could be placed in the center of a room. One such desk, a rolltop or *bureau à cylindre,* now back at Versailles, was started by Jean-François Oeben for Louis XV and finished on Oeben's death by his assistant, Jean-Henri Riesener. The rolltop locked, allowing the king to leave his desk in a secure mess, a possibility not afforded by a flat desk. Probably only the king and his cabinetmakers knew at the time exactly how to make this desk do all the things it was meant to do, so artful were the mechanisms and the design of secret compartments. A quarter turn of the royal key and the desk rolled open automatically with the help of a concealed spring. The odor of exotic woods wafted up like a sachet as one plumbed the secrets of its ample depths. When the desk was locked, a wooden writing panel came out from its side so a secretary could write a letter; a separate compartment slid forth so a blue-liveried servant *(Continued on page 41)*

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Thierry Millerand demonstrates the charms of secret drawers and compartments that appear when half of the *table à la bourgogne, above,* springs out from the rest.

(Continued from page 38) could change both ink and pens without seeing the contents.

By the time of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, Boucher and Drouais were succeeded by Fragonard and Mme. Vigée-Lebrun. The small rooms and specialized furniture they loved to paint as backgrounds were even more refined, and mechanical furniture continued to be the rage. Marie Antoinette commissioned an elaborate rolltop desk from David Roentgen in about 1772, which Marjorie Merriweather Post bought in the '20s and lived with at Hillwood, her house in Washington, D.C. Marie Antoinette was also fond of small, movable, totally feminine tables. About to have a child, she commissioned an adjustable headboard and a Houdini of a table (at the Metropolitan today) that at the push of a button could produce surfaces for writing while standing up or sitting, a dressing table, and a tray for breakfast. In fact, the entire top of the table cranks up on four metal shafts to make a glorified hospital table. Did she write to the melancholy Swedish diplomat whom the court took for her lover—a Count Fersen—from this pet possession, and did it follow her from Versailles to the Tuileries as she began her house arrest?

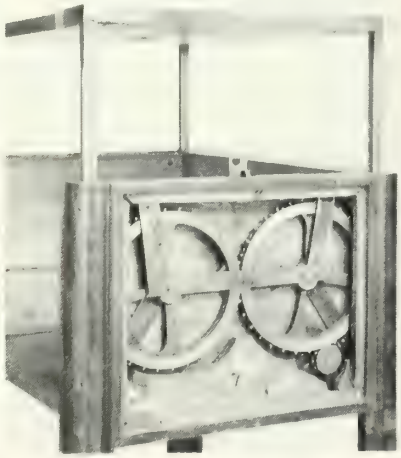
Mechanical devices were not confined only to surprise furniture. According to Jean Feray, Inspecteur Principal des Monuments Historiques, "Molière was said to have died in an invalid's chair with adjustable back and arms during a performance of *Le Malade Imaginaire.* This tattered armchair is still the proud possession of the Comédie Française. A flying armchair was made for Mme. de Châteauroux, an early mistress of Louis XV, as an attempt at an elevator. Tables completely set for a meal were known to come up through the floor, dumbwaiter style, at Choisy, an arrangement later imitated at Linderhof, Ludwig II's 19th-century palace in Bavaria. Blondel had come up with an armchair that flushed as early as 1738. A safe in the Tuileries Palace—called an iron armoire—had locks made by the king. In it revolutionaries found documents that further incriminated Louis XVI.

"From Germany, where winters were long and very precise and complicated projects helped pass time, came clocks that flew out at you and music boxes that both sang and moved," Feray continues. "Giant mechanical dolls, as well as Roentgen's fabulously complicated tables and desks, were imported by a French court easily diverted by novelty. Architects' tables whose surfaces could be raised, tilted, or lowered by a crank were in wide use in the second half of the century and are the type of mechanical furniture most affordable and most found on the market today. Last fall at the Paris Biennale, 18th-century dealer Claude Lévy organized his entire booth around both architects' tables and the adjustable tables made for country châteaux where music was the entertainment."

Mechanical furniture with a major provenance or maker comes on the market rarely. In 1979 at the Akram Ojjeh sale by Sotheby's in Monte Carlo, a mechanical marquetry table called *table à la Bourgogne,* in the style of Oeben, sold for $250,000. When Mrs. Nina Blumenthal Sweeney consigned a similar one to Sotheby's last fall, Sotheby's specialist for European furniture, Thierry Millerand, put it through its paces for interested buyers as though it were a musical instrument or a treasure chest. "It always creates a sensation when you *(Continued on next page)*

(Continued from preceding page) demonstrate a table like this—it satisfies the desire to see function treated in a high-style way," he explains. "The *table à la Bourgogne* is a type of mechanical furniture that seems to have survived in some numbers. There is one identical in design but in black lacquer that will soon be seen when the Linsky Collection is installed at the Metropolitan. A few years ago another one from a New York collection was exhibited at the Winter Antiques Show. These pieces are curiosities that also appeal to the collectors because of the role they played in their original owners' lives. In the 18th century, this kind of table was a very personal thing; the owner wouldn't have tended to share it, and no one else would have had a key. A woman could put jewels inside it, secret correspondence, an aggregate of minerals the size of paperweights, a beautiful assortment of pens, seals, wax, and rich writing paraphernalia. It's always a sign of refinement when a piece is fitted with so many mechanisms. It would have been very carefully conceived and executed and cost a lot even in the beginning."

Versailles, the Louvre, the Wallace Collection, the James de Rothschild Collection at Waddesdon Manor, the Metropolitan, Getty, and Frick museums all have major examples of mechanical furniture on view. The Frick's table by Martin Carlin sits under a window in the Fragonard Room, shut up and demure, as though waiting to come to life. Fully extended, it is poised to organize a profusion of domestic activity and the stylish messiness of a woman of fashion. □



Lifting mechanism for the table on page 38, Frick Collection.

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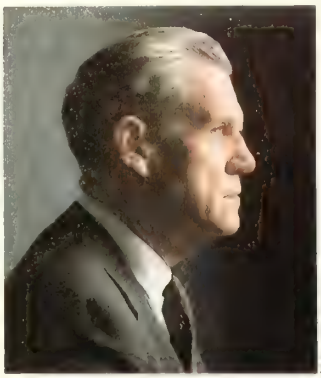
J. IRWIN MILLER

America's densest concentration of high-style modern architecture was the brainchild of this imaginative Indiana businessman

By Michael Sorkin

At first, the approach to Columbus, Indiana, along highway 31 looks like that to any small American town: the tangle of fast-food spots, gas stations, car lots, the ephemeral commercial architecture of the strip. But soon one begins to see that something is different. Just beyond the regulation-issue highway department sign announcing the town and commemorating the success of its high-school gymnastics team is another sign—more considered, more self conscious. In unmistakably good graphics, the name of the town is written across the bottom of a field of multicolored *c*'s. Almost immediately, the roof-form and steeple of a modern church soar into view. The building is by no one less than Eero Saarinen and pulling up to have a look, one finds oneself joining a tour already in progress.

Over 40,000 people a year take this tour, and the reason is architecture. Columbus—a town with a population around 30,000—boasts close to 50 buildings designed by leading architects, including such lights as Saarinen, I.M. Pei, Richard Meier, Harry Weese, Kevin Roche, and Robert Venturi. The tour is a long one, covering every corner of the community, the way carefully marked by those well-designed signs. This collection of modern buildings seems initially like a strange museum, embedded in the traditional plan of a Midwestern town. What's really remarkable about these buildings, though, is not simply that they are improbably fine architecture, but that they serve perfectly normal needs: schools, youth clubs, firehouses, branch banks.



J. Irwin Miller, patron of Columbus, Indiana.

The man behind this astonishing architectural efflorescence is J. Irwin Miller, for many years chairman of the board of the Cummins Engine Company and now chairman of its executive and finance committee. Miller is a lifelong resident of Columbus and an unabashed apostle of small-town life. Now in his early 70s, Miller has his office in the heart of town in the two-story iron and brick plains-Victorian building erected in 1881 to house the family bank. Miller himself is imposingly tall and turned out in correct corporate pinstripes, but his manner is candid and friendly. His amiable drawl, nevertheless, belies an education at Yale and Oxford and an abundance of credentials from the cultural and corporate courts of American power. Clearly, he is comfortable with the merely apparent anomalies of exercising his multinational vision from a tiny town in Indiana. His office couldn't be more expressive of the seam between elite and middle America. The relic charm is only on the outside: Within, the building has been redone in austerely correct "corporate modern," efficient and unadorned. Rather, *almost* unadorned. In Miller's inner sanctum a fire crackles comfortingly. In an anteroom to one side of it, Miller leads a visitor with *(Continued on page 46)*



Indiana Bell Telephone Company Switching Center by Caudill Rowlett Scott, 1978, projects a bold High Tech profile.



Fire Station No. 4 of the Columbus Fire Department by Venturi & Rauch, 1967, draws on roadside architectural imagery.

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(Continued from page 44) pride to see the massive rolltop desk of his grandfather, still crammed with that ancestor's papers and its writing surface covered with more current souvenirs.

The connection between Miller and Columbus's architecture is longstanding. As the head of a large and profitable corporation he has had ample opportunity for direct patronage, and Cummins can claim a number of major works. However, his real impact has come through a philanthropic notion that in effect offers a challenge to the town itself. Miller's proposition is the promise that the Cummins Foundation will pay the architectural fees for any civic building if the overseeing body agrees to hire an architect from a list of a dozen distinguished practitioners submitted by the Foundation. The list itself is compiled by an anonymous panel of "senior" architects and revised from project to project. Agreement to use Miller's list is the extent of the town's obligation, and he is careful to avoid further intervention. The only stipulation is that a different architect must be chosen for each project. As Miller puts it in his understated way, "I feel that a variety of expression will be valuable to the community."

Miller's idea gained momentum in the mid-1950s. An influx of workers to staff the town's plants had more than doubled the population, and Columbus faced the necessity of opening a school a year for some years to come; the first two built were hasty prefabs, "lousy buildings" likely to soon wear out. It was this vision of the town penny-wise-and-pound-foolishly jeopardizing its future that prompted Miller to step in with his offer. Characteristically, it sprang not from the impulse to play Medici (a frequently made comparison, to be sure) but from a more hardnosed public spirit. Miller's credo is summed up in a phrase he is fond of repeating: "It's expensive to be mediocre in this world." Looking out his window at the county courthouse opposite he remarks, maybe a little smugly, "That was an expensive building when they built it 110 years ago, and there was a lot of opposition. But we're still using it. Most of the surrounding towns have had four courthouses in that time."

While the Columbus program is a postwar innovation, Miller's own interest in architecture began long before then. During his childhood, the family took the Chicago newspapers. He remembers his interest in the great Tribune Tower competition and his fascination with the variety of schemes that the *Trib* splashily reproduced every Sunday. Later, at Yale, he found himself in the midst of the excited debate over the new architecture from the Bauhaus. A battle, it seems, that was widely joined. "It was about the only issue you had as an undergraduate," says Miller.



Emilio Ambasz's scheme (in a drawing by Michael Meritet) for stands of trees to act as "gates" for Columbus, Indiana.

In a speech to the National Convention of the American Institute of Architects, Miller recalled: "In my whole life I know of no more powerful influence than the daily walk I had to take each day in Oxford from my college to the river and back, past Jesus College, down High Street, through Christ Church, Tom Quad, and the Long Walk—in every season, in every kind of weather." Still, if these experiences disposed Miller to an architectural sensibility, the galvanizing encounter was the family's decision to commission Eliel Saarinen—Eero's father—to design a new building for the First Christian Church in 1937. Neighbors had encouraged the Millers to visit Saarinen's magnificent complex of buildings for the Cranbrook Academy and Cranbrook School of Art in Michigan, and they were clearly impressed by what they saw. On the first approach, though, Saarinen declined the commission, professing a lack of interest in what he saw as a preoccupation with the ostentations of ritual in most churches. However, the architect's complaint drew a sympathetic response. They told him, says Miller, that their own conviction demanded living a simple outward life but a rich one within. And so he was engaged.

The ethic of honesty, craft, and simplicity in Saarinen's work also characterized the man himself, qualities that Miller seeks in architecture and architects. Like Miller, Saarinen was a builder and a problem-solver and, like Miller, he was a man of great personal integrity and force. To this day, Miller insists that the right way to pick an architect is to choose one with human qualities one admires and only look to the portfolio to confirm them. The first time that his grandmother—then in her late 70s—met Saarinen, she decided to support the decision to hire him: "At my age I probably won't like what he builds. But I recognize a great man when I see him. I'll follow where he leads."

The church—a masterpiece—was controversial. People asked "when the machinery was going to be moved in" to the austere volume. The impact of a building on the consciousness of a place is hard to assess, but Miller tells an anecdote that reveals something of the influence of this church. The two greatest local exports to the world are diesel engines and Robert Indiana, the artist. Years ago, Indiana confided to Miller that the first experiences that really woke him up to what art could be about were his visits to Eliel Saarinen's church.

Even when pressed, Miller is reluctant to formulate pat or congratulatory phrases about how all this architecture has affected Columbus. He prefers to stress other qualities of the community that are "invisible." His outward pride in Columbus centers on its early efforts at racial *(Continued on page 48)*



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US SKI TEAM

(Continued from page 46) integration, on its state leadership in per capita giving to charity, on its spirit of volunteerism, on the fact that it had a club for disadvantaged children 20 years before it had a country club. Still, Columbus has been unmistakably shaped by its architecture, by this literal gift of identity. It has helped Cummins attract executives and it has helped the town attract industry from abroad. Ironically, it has increased the number of architects in Columbus even if it has put them at a competitive disadvantage in securing commissions. It has, in effect, redeemed the very idea of life in a small town by showing that it need not exclude access to the best. And finally, it has given Columbus a legacy of building that embodies, in Miller's words, "the cost-effectiveness of quality."

Miller loves Columbus, talks volubly about it like a booster trying to recruit a high-school football star to the state college team. And he loves it honestly, not for some abstract vision of what it is, but for a concrete sense of what the town has done. He talks with pleasure about his drive to work over a small-town route that takes him from his own Eero Saarinen–designed house past a gaggle of notable buildings and into the prosperous little place. He compares the ride to his daily walks at Oxford, and one senses that his pleasure comes not just from the beautiful forms but also the sense that they are a celebration of the accomplishments of the spirit. Miller tells a story about the early controversies over Eliel Saarinen's church design. The architect was asked why, in a modernist scheme, he found it necessary to include a tall, freestanding steeple. "Because a church must look like a church," he replied. "People do not only worship on the inside of a church but on the outside. They worship a little every time they pass." This must be the way Miller sees his hometown, as the site of the riches most basic to his life. The architecture announces them. In speech after speech that he has given in his role of champion of corporate support for the arts, Miller (a college classics major) quotes a line remembered from Euripides: "Where the good things are, there is home." □

Michael Sorkin is an architect and writer living in New York.

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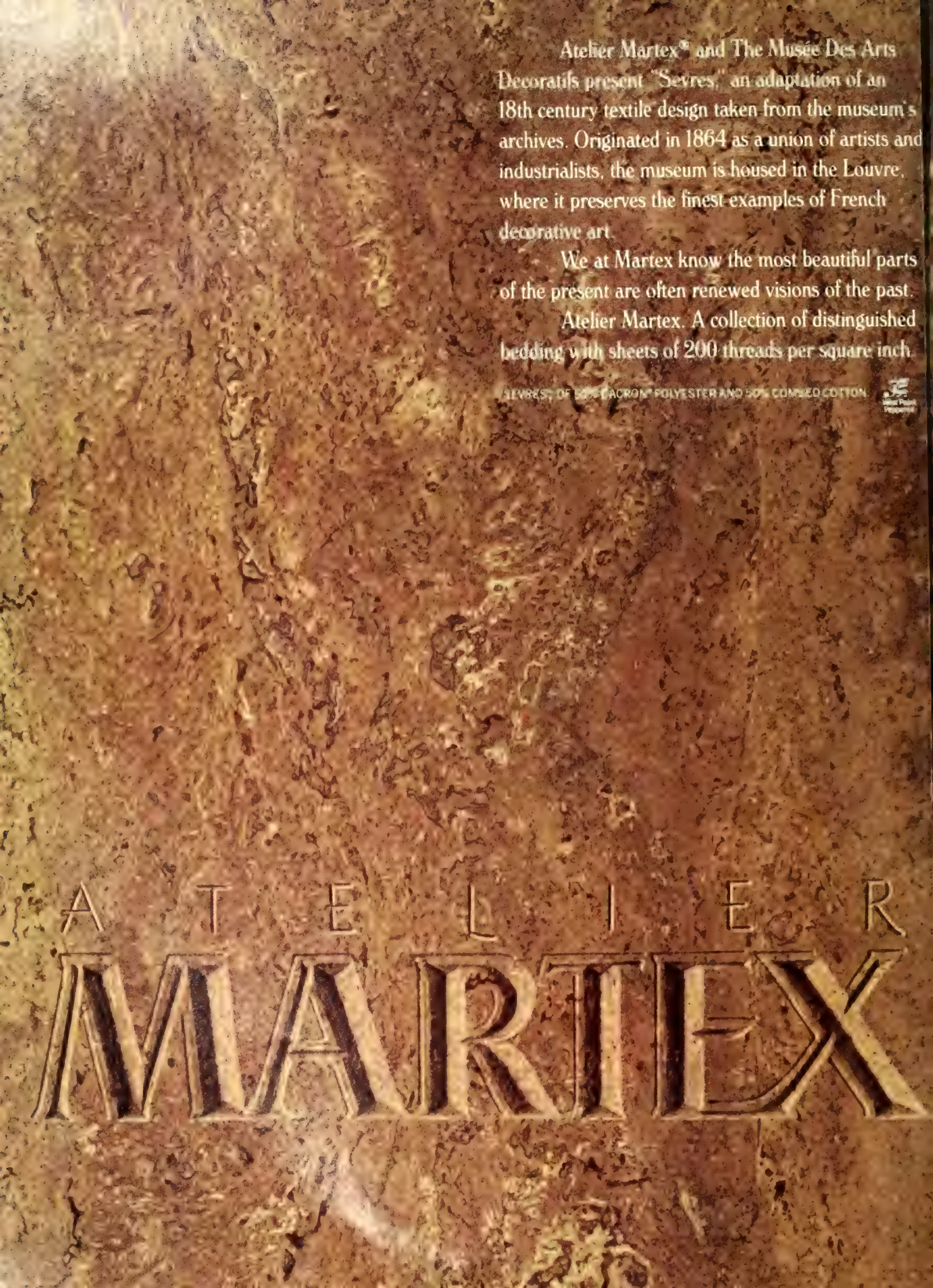




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In the late 1970s someone started to build the house and ran out of money, leaving it little more than half done, without floorboards or plumbing or plaster on the walls. "Our friends thought we were crazy to take it on," says Mignon Winans, "but the rooms were nice and high, and from the south terrace we could see distant city lights—on a clear day, the Pacific. It is far smaller than our previous houses, but that was what we wanted, and I had a feeling of great confidence from the start." The Winanses' longtime decorator, John Cottrell, says "the most important thing we had to work with was Mignon's vision."

Mignon and William Winans are lifelong Italophiles, the more so since their daughter married an Italian and moved to Rome, and they are always happy in the Italian countryside. Living in a similar climate, they hoped to capture a similar mood.

Cottrell quickly explains that "the furnishings are not Italian, but the relaxed yet traditional atmosphere is, with its free indoor-outdoor flow." His generous use of trompe l'oeil—faux bois, faux marbre, a painted-on window, painted-on awnings—is a classical Italian practice, as is the pavement in tile of the 60-foot hall that forms the spine of the house.

Architect Bob Ray Offenhauser's role was to complete the building, having first revised the floor plan to better serve the couple, their small staff, and their long-established entertaining patterns. Mignon Winans is especially grateful for his work on the south terrace, which had been a useless sun-baked area before. Now with its attractive wood roof, its potted plants, lanterns, and fountain, the terrace is a magnet for family and guests at all times of the day. Bill Winans's two avocations, cooking and model-glider construction, were accommodated in a kitchen revision and an added workroom.

Describing their social life, Mrs. Winans explains, "We see a few people a lot, and I prefer six or eight for dinner, although we have managed 24 at three tables on special occasions." Pictures on the Steinway document their crowd: the James Stewarts' wedding portrait, Janet Gaynor, the late Merle Oberon, one photograph signed "To Bill and Mignon with our deep friendship, Nancy and Ron." Mignon Winans would hate to bore her guests with the same table setting but doesn't keep track of who saw which table: She simply never repeats herself. Like her mother before her, Mrs. Ingle Barr, another famous California beauty and hostess, Mrs. Winans collects many things, among them table appointments.

Text continued on page 61





Preceding pages: Many hours are spent on the roofed south terrace—lunches, dinners, drinks, and just visiting. Arrangements are flexible: Here, two square tables for four are pushed together for six. *Above:* Mignon Winans in her library; William Winans in his w rkroom where he builds the gliders that he flies by remote-control radio. *Opposite:* A center hall divides the house. Added for the couple were the tile floor, a trompe l'oeil window above the terrace doors, skylights, and pilasters with a faux marbre finish. The Italianate spirit is sensed from the moment of entering.









Above: The library contains the kind of "cozy grouping" that Mignon Winans likes. The couple are likely to spend the evening in this room when they are home alone. John Cottrell had painter Nicholas Zuberbuehler decorate the walls in trompe l'oeil paneling. *Opposite:* A Louis XV piece displays some of the ruby and cranberry glass collected by mother and daughter.

Opposite: Vermeil objects gleam against white brocade. *Above:* The drawing room's luscious raspberry-moiré walls give an entirely different character to the the glazed-chintz upholstered pieces, which previously stood in a white-walled room that Cottrell and Mrs. Winans did together. The luxurious setting combines a great variety of materials. *Right:* Crystal candelabra on an antique French walnut chest with Peking glass, vermeil peaches, opaline, Meissen; in foreground, chinoiserie chess set in cinnabar and ivory.







(*Continued from page 54*) The opulence of the Winanses' rooms is built in part on her collections, which include ruby and cranberry glass, Imari, jade, malachite, blanc de chine, vermeil, opaline, Meissen, cinnabar, and ivory—some of it acquired by her mother or with her mother. Another strong thread of continuity that enriches the house is the furniture, whose family history is the same as the collections'.

A Winans house is always an experience in color because Mignon Winans's philosophy is firm. "I love pretty colors, especially pink tones. Some of the loveliest rooms I've seen have been yellow, but they're not becoming to women." Her husband adds, "Mignon loves people, and even the lighting has been put in to flatter her friends and make them happy." An invitation to the Winans house is rarely declined, so happy her guests must be. □



Opposite: Mignon Winans's favorite party, dinner for six, and a table setting she has designed herself out of a vast store of appointments. Valentino made the tablecloth in Rome. Objects include green cut-glass Czechoslovakian wineglasses and Imari plates, with roses from the Winans garden. *Above:* The pool came with the house and was rather dull-looking until Cottrell worked his trompe l'oeil magic with painted awnings. *Left:* Bill Winans cooking *penne alla vodka*. Though a cook does much of the California cooking, in their Sun Valley house he prepares all the meals, for as many as 35 guests.

Opposite: Mignon Winans's bedroom is a perfect example of a sought-after look she describes as "dramatic comfort," and shows, too, her love for pink tones and pretty fabrics. The print is a moiré taffeta. *Right:* A large sitting room, much used for reading, is part of her suite, as is the bath/dressing room, *above*. The dressing rooms of both the Winanses lead to their indoor swimming pool.





ART IN SACRED SERVICE

Vestments by Cleve Gray in a chapel by Richard Meier





Preceding pages: Violet chasuble and altarcloth for Advent and other times of reflection and waiting in the church calendar. *Opposite:* The exterior of the Hartford Seminary. The chapel is beneath the curving roof at left. *This page:* White vestments are worn by the Reverend Wadi Haddad. Reverend Crowder wears the red vestments for tragic holy days; the Reverend Lee McGee wears the green for ordinary times; and the Reverend Kyle McGee the violet.



BY CLEVE GRAY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY DUANE MICHALS

It is rare for an American painter to design anything for an American church. This unusual cooperation was due to the imaginative pastor and parish of the Church of St. James in Farmington, Connecticut. The pastor, Rev. James Crowder, is a fan of contemporary painting. One of his parishoners, Jane Dillenberger, is a leading authority on the visual arts and their relation to religion. Sometime in 1981 they began a series of conversations about how they might develop a rapport between their church and the world of contemporary art. So it followed that when the Rev. Crowder mentioned to Mrs. Dillenberger that the vestments of St. James were threadbare and needed replacing they quickly convinced each other that it would be far better to commission new designs than to make the usual kind of selection from ecclesiastical catalogues. The parishoners agreed.

At this point I entered the picture, for Jane Dillenberger admired a set of green vestments I made several years ago for St. John's Church in nearby Washington, Connecticut. That had been my first such undertaking, and the experience taught me it was important to choose the materials to be used *before* I started to design the vestments. The colors available, the textures, the weights and weaves of the cloths were of necessity a determining factor of the design itself. For the new project at Farmington I chose a thin wool crepe—the French call it georgette—as the fundamental cloth. The linear designs required a sharply contrasting material. I found a variety of brilliant silks to be appliquéd onto the crepe. My part of the work was completed in six months; 15 women of St. James parish volunteered to do the sewing, which they finished in about one year.

The photographs that appear here were taken in the chapel and outside of Richard Meier's recently completed headquarters of the Hartford Seminary Foundation. Having attended the dedication of the vestments at St. James during the second week of Advent, Jane Dillenberger and her husband, John, president of the Hartford Seminary Foundation, invited Rev. Crowder, wearing the new purple robes, to lead the regular Monday morning service at the Seminary during the third week of Advent. The robes had had a startling effect in their contrast with the 19th-century architecture of St. James Church, and we were all curious to see them in Richard Meier's uncompromisingly contemporary setting. In both instances my first reaction was of gratitude to the women who carried out my designs so beautifully. Their work was complex, and I am sure that individual acts of faith were required of many of them during the year of work on the project.

I relate immediately to such secular acts of faith because I think that *(Text continued on page 160)*





The chapel of the Hartford Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut, by Richard Meier, completed in 1981. The pristine white space is illuminated by clerestory windows, including a concealed skylight above the recess behind altar covered with an altarcloth designed by Cleve Gray.



White vestments celebrate happy festivals like Easter. They are worn by the Reverend James Crowder, pastor of the Episcopal church for which they were designed: St. James Church, Farmington, Connecticut.






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THE TIMES ATLAS OF WORLD HISTORY



PATTERNS FOR COUNTRY LIVING

BY MARGARET MORSE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY FELICIANO

Decorating a house becomes as personal as a signature when the owner does it herself. In the Colonial-style weekend house that Jody and Morton Rutherfurd share with their two sons, the decorating reveals a love of pattern and of the kilim rugs and Kishangarh painting (a school of the mid- and late-18th century) of India.

It was a somber house when the Rutherfurds bought it two years ago. Tall, handsome trees shortchanged its rooms of sunshine. The yellow living room looked ill-proportioned, too large for its low ceiling. Painting the paneling white made it brighter but, the Rutherfurds decided some months later, still not bright enough: Up went Colefax & Fowler white calico-thistle wallcovering with stripes suggestive of quilting. Into the center of the room, around a brass cocktail table, went plush-pillowed seating covered in a peppery Brunschwig print and Cowtan & Tout carnations. An ample Aiken-style sofa (from Mr. Rutherfurd's family and fitting for his six-and-a-half-foot frame)

The living room blends cozy overscale seating with exotic pieces—an Indo-Portuguese chest-on-chest, a painting and figurines from India.



made the room look less imposing in scale. On the first floor, bare windows bring in verdant outdoor views, and expanses of pegged-oak flooring (newly stripped) display the woven geometry of kilim rugs. Books and a cashmere throw are always within reach, and each room has an eye-catching piece of antique furniture—a teak and ebony chest-on-chest, inlaid fruitwood and ebony desk, or dining table with caryatid legs and a tiger-striped grain. Says Jody, "I love everything to have detail, whether pattern or texture. I could always keep adding."

India, the country that gave the world the word "chintz," inspired the Clarence House wallcoverings in the library and master bedroom. The Hindu and Puritan aesthetics both show the urge to outline, and interestingly, it is largely the "primitive" stylized designs of India that give the American Colonial–style rooms a contemporary feeling.

Pattern brightens even the built-in shelves of the house, as Jody rotates the lineup of books, jars, and matted pictures. Given a period of leisure over several months, Jody likes to search out an antiquarian book a friend would treasure and bind it in leather herself.

For Jody Rutherfurd

Text continued on page 78

Opposite: The chaise longue is to Jody "the perfect place to be alone in a room," especially when needlepoint projects and photograph albums are close at hand and narcissus scents the air. *Above:* The Rutherfurds found the 1930s blueprints for the house under the window seat on the living room's fireside wall. Fruit still life is from John Rosselli.







Opposite: A painting of Krishna hangs above a marquetry partners' desk in the oval study. On the near side of the hallway is the library, a study in pattern on pattern: painted horses from John Rosselli, a palampore-inspired fabric on the walls, Russian tea canisters on a decoupage table. *Above:* A larger view with leather chairs, sandstone backgammon table. *Below:* In the dining room, a bold Australian painting, American Renaissance chairs and table with Dorothy Hafner plates and vases, Henri Bendel napkins.





decorating amounts to serendipity: "Overly planned schemes don't work. I've chosen things for themselves, and they've managed to fit in with each other." Color matches are as casual as a bouquet of field flowers. With the family's many moves, chairs have gone through various incarnations—stripped, repainted, or reupholstered (sometimes with a bolt of fabric that had been waiting for its opportunity in an attic trunk). A chaise—a $100 coup second-hand—is refurbished. A rattan chair and ottoman that started out on a porch now give comfort in the corner of a bedroom, but they may find their way to yet another room. As Jody says, "I never tire of rearranging things." □

Right: In the master bedroom, white provides the canvas for a mix of patterns. Léron hearts and Porthault flowers dress the bed. *Above:* The front of the house from the private drive. The pond attracts deer, ducks, swans, snapping turtles, and—when it ices over—the four skaters in the family.







Opposite: In the entry a Neoclassical stone warrior stands opposite the laminated bar-and-media cabinet. A marble table by designer LaRocca holds a French *bronze doré* clock. *Right:* Where a wall once was, columns in the foreground provide support; LaRocca added the others for balance and interest. Olivewood klismos dining chairs designed by T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings were inspired by ancient Greek furniture.

A NEW YORK LOOK

Designer Michael LaRocca gives an international couple a sleek base in Manhattan

PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI

They're in New York often enough to make owning a city apartment preferable to lengthy hotel stays, so they bought a place on the basis of its fine location, relying on designer Michael LaRocca to give it style. Says LaRocca, "My clients have a typically British house in London and a Greek-style house in Greece. Here, they asked for 'a New York look' that would also reflect some of the man's Greek heritage."

Relocating walls, LaRocca turned the pinched two-bedroom space into a gracious one-bedroom. Stretches of mirror and glazed white walls give the apartment a new impression of space and light. Corners are curved in the entry "to be more welcoming. A room seems bigger when its walls never end," says the designer.

By combining classic, simply shaped furniture of all periods—"fourth century B.C. to the 21st century"—LaRocca was able to produce a contemporary look as eclectic as New York itself, adding select pieces of art and furniture that convey the Greek spirit "without being overly Corinthian," he says. With space at a premium, fluid acrylic pieces often substitute for wood, their substance disappearing to allow special objects to float on top. LaRocca warmed his gray-and-white scheme with Aegean-inspired colors such as rooftop red and sea-foam green. Bridging all its areas, the middle of the apartment is now a focus, with tapering, temple-like columns surrounding a magnificent Neoclassical French mahogany center table. □ *By Mary Seehafer*





In the living area, the classic shapes of Mies van der Rohe Brno chairs and a painted English Regency chair. Drum table is inlaid with bone. On the acrylic table, French Empire candlesticks and a Roman bust of a young athlete from the first century A.D. In the corner, a fragrant lemon tree. Portrait was painted by a 19th-century Frenchwoman.



This page: Reflected in the living area's mirrored wall, the floor-to-ceiling portrait is an outscale surprise. *Opposite:* Bronze bed was designed by LaRocca. Lamps are made from terra-cotta Regency-style urns. Dutch colonial chest of ebony and teak holds a first-century B.C. Egyptian marble torso.



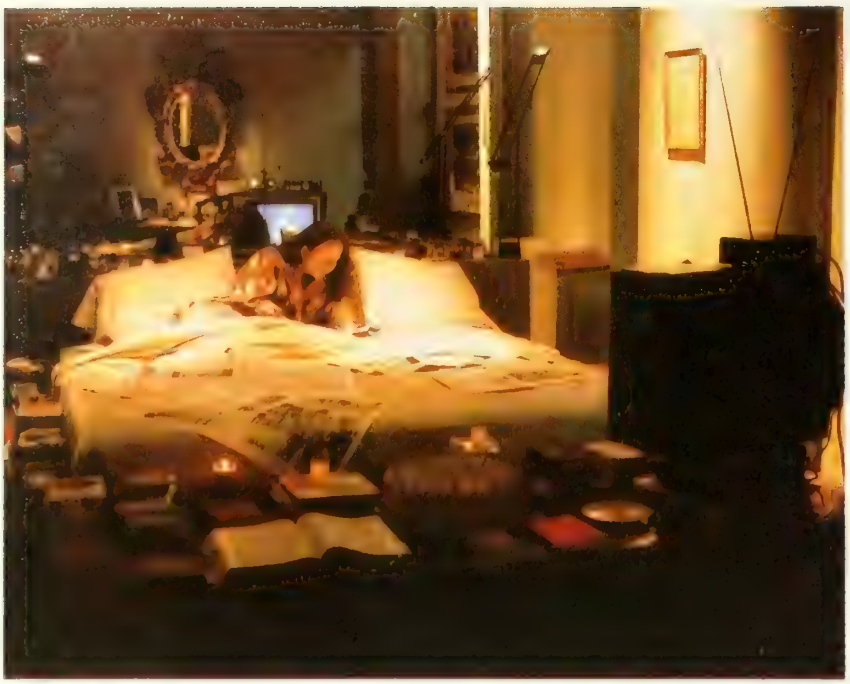




THE LURES OF LOFT LIVING

Brooke Hayward explains how her move from Los Angeles to New York was made appealing by the open spaces of a Manhattan loft

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIC BOWMAN



Opposite: In the entrance hall, one of four Warhol panels of Brooke reflected in a 19th-century Italian mirror flanked by painted terra-cotta dog and cat. *Left:* Brooke lying on antique ivory-colored crushed-velvet bedspread. A *Vision of Christ* by William Blake on wall at right. Oldenburg's *Wedding Cake,* 1963, on blue granite table from South America.

About a year and a half ago, I bought a loft in downtown Manhattan, not, one would think, a particularly iconoclastic thing to do. Yet at least once a week, someone asks me why. Why, of all people, me: a single woman, accustomed from childhood to a certain standard of living, unversed in the requisite training of urban guerrilla warfare, indeed known to my friends as carefree, lighthearted, vague, prone to wandering around with my head in the clouds. How could I choose such a disreputable part of town to live in? Wouldn't I be much better off on the Upper East Side?

Implicit in these questions, aside from concern, is downright disapprobation, based, I've come to think, on two issues—*service* and *security*.

Aside from the obvious response, "Show me *anyone* who is *compos mentis* who wouldn't be better off on the Upper East Side," there is another answer that is also a question: *space*.

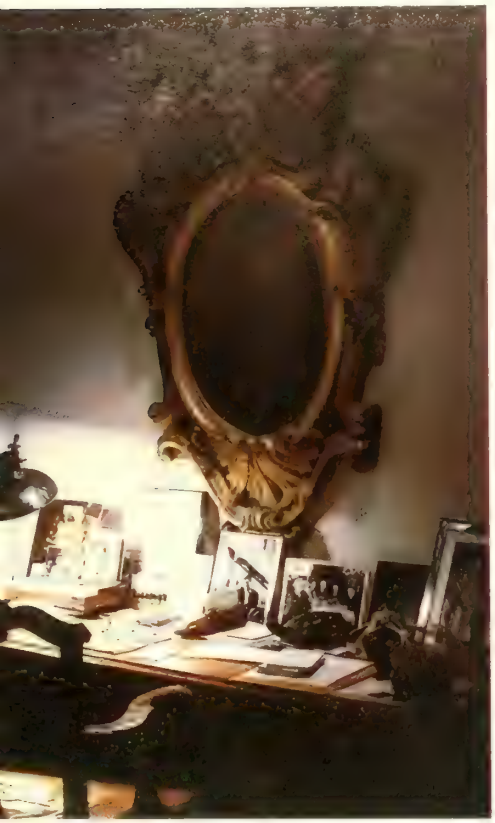
Where do you get it in Manhattan if you're not prepared to make awesome sacrifices? The first two things you pass up if you opt for *space* are *service* and *security*. Forget them. You have just joined a breed of urbanite who is a throwback to another era, a kind of malcontent, a pioneer. A robust new attitude is in order.

I returned to New York City after 20 years in California, where space is taken for granted. I like it, I require it. I intended to find it even if it were to be only marginally well located. Marginal is certainly the operative word here. The citizens of my turf—a defunct office building on the corner of Fifth Avenue and 19th Street—are in a breathless state of flux. The area is changing rapidly from commercial to residential, as many of its small businesses go bankrupt and hungry developers co-op what was unthinkable five years ago. In 10 years, they say, there will be foot traffic on these streets all night as there is now on Madison Avenue or Second or Third. Who knows? In the meantime, for groceries, flowers, laundries, and shoe repairs, we are bound on the east by Gramercy Park, on the south by Greenwich Village, and the west by Chelsea. And it's the heart of mass transit country; subways all around you, every line. But you have to be brave enough to learn to ride them; then it's 10 minutes from either Bloomingdale's or SoHo, both in opposite directions.

Walking due east on 20th Street, one passes a series of brownstones including historic number 28, birthplace of Theodore Roosevelt in 1858, and then a block further on, one runs smack into Gramercy Park, that bastion of upper-crust old New York. It is still in a remarkable state of preservation. Lovely 19th- and turn-of-the-century buildings, such as The Players club, surround the actual park, a lush tree-studded garden outlined by ancient iron railings. There is no more idyllic setting for a picnic lunch, but also, wisely, no public access without the legendary key that belongs only to each of those buildings fronting it. Fortunately one of my friends belongs to The Players club. . . .This is a fashionable, low-key, low-crime community with wonderful neighborhood stores. I take my shirts over to Mayfield's Hand Laundry, a little hole-in-the-wall on Irving Place, where Big Al Schweitzer



Right: A 19th-century painting of a cow, flanked by kudo horns. English andiron figures of a hornless unicorn and a lion. A pair of Palomino-colored Regency club sofas with 14th-century Chinese chairs sit on a Gorevan rug. On the right a marble head fragment from a New York building. *Below:* Bronze 19th-century inkwells on a 19th-century pine desk over which hangs an 18th-century Russian mirror. Chair is stripped Chippendale.



who is 74, washes and irons everything himself, remembers which shirts you want folded and which on hangers, never gives a receipt or forgets a name, and is apt to offer you a bite of his sandwich, which he likes to eat with his feet up on the desk.

For seriously indulgent grocery consideration, however, a pleasant stroll down Fifth Avenue invariably leads right into Balducci's on Sixth Avenue between 9th and 10th. Out of countless hedonistic fantasies revolving around the restaurant he would someday like to own, art dealer Irving Blum's current favorite is one whereby Balducci's—or an exact replica thereof—is erected directly in front of a glorious French bistro (something on the order of the Brasserie Lipp, brought over from Paris in its entirety), so that





the patron must of necessity pass by all the tempting edible displays on the way into dinner. And another friend claims his final instruction is to have his ashes scattered throughout Balducci's produce and cheese departments.

However, back in the real world, when I bought my loft, it was the last thing on earth I intended to do. I think I was in a state of shock after six months of intensive office-hunting at the height of the Manhattan real-estate boom. I didn't start out wanting to *buy* an office; I wanted to rent a place with enough privacy if children or friends should come into town looking for a place to stay. (Admittedly, this is not the average office.) Furthermore, my main requirements were those aforementioned bugaboos, service and security. These soon fell by the wayside, as it became apparent that eight-or-so stalwart real-estate agents working with me several hours a day were unable to locate them except in conjunction with the occasional, hideous new high-rise, or in one-bedroom apartments for sale at prices that started at $300,000. And even here, something was terribly wrong: These apartments were *cramped*, no closet space, windowless bathrooms, kitchenettes. They had been remodeled for Munchkins. I began to growl about missing California.

Then one evening, I was taken to a party for the completion of a penthouse loft at Broadway and 29th Street. That area had never occurred to me. But the host, a wonderful cameraman named Nestor Almendros, whom I'd known in Los Angeles, seemed euphoric about it. And the price was right. It always amazes me how quickly price resolves my conflicts. The next morning, I called Nestor's real-estate agent; that afternoon I bought the first loft I saw. *(Text continued on page 179)*

Above: On the wall a pair of 19th-century Austrian plaques of a man and his bride in eastern costume. On the table four Staffordshire lions, cow head for cheese, and greyhound. American painted turn-of-the-century plates of Kipling's *Jungle Books* stories, 19th-century American glasses, and 19th-century English half cat–half dolphin bronze candlesticks.



Opposite: A 19th-century Irish armoire on a 19th-century Chinese rug. Queen Anne chairs around a chestnut baker's table with a trough underneath for loaves of bread. *Left:* A 17th-century carved pine swan on a Corinthian capital from a New York building under a 19th-century English painting of a slave with his infant charge after a shipwreck.







BY WILLIAM WALTON

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARC RIBOUD

NEW SPLENDOR FOR CHINA

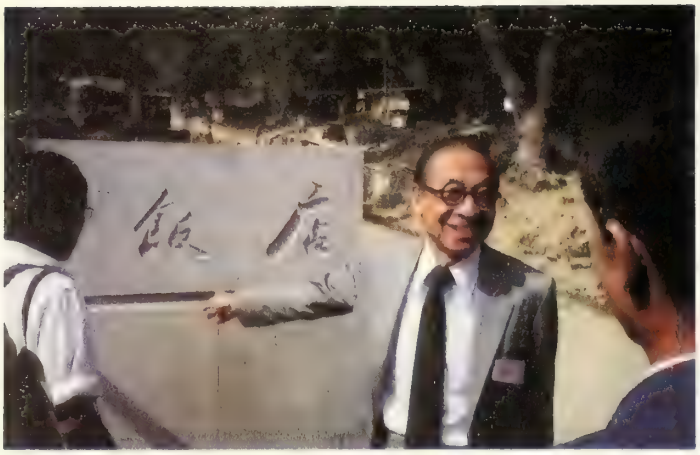
In the Fragrant Hills west of Beijing, architect I. M. Pei creates a hotel weaving together traditional Chinese and contemporary architectural ideas. His arrangement of low pavilions around a series of gardens in a park reflects both Western architecture's new-found respect for tradition and Chinese refinement and sensitivity to nature

Ancient rocks and aged trees are elemental to the Chinese-American architect's design. For the garden he moved giant rocks from remote Yunnan's Stone Forest, *opposite,* to center the landscape glimpsed, *above,* through a traditional window patterned after one in his family's old garden in Suzchou. He found many of the trees already on the site.





The geometry of gray tiles enlivens the façade seen across a reflecting pool and, in the foreground, the serpentine channel of a *Liushui-yin* (Music of Running Water) used in a traditional poetry-writing ceremonial.



Above: Architect I.M. Pei found Chinese artisans still adept at creating pebble walks, *right,* and the latticed galleries, *overleaf,* that surround the hotel lobby and provide access to hotel guest rooms. All rooms view garden and mountains.

Imagine if Joseph Stalin, 30 years after the Russian Revolution, had called home one of his country's most noted émigré artists to perform for the U.S.S.R.—say, Igor Stravinsky to write a new national anthem, or Rudolph Nureyev to take over the Bolshoi. About as unlikely as anything you could dream up. Revolutions don't forgive, at least for centuries.

But something about as improbable has happened to the Chinese-American architect I.M. Pei.

First the Chinese government invited him back to discuss the nation's critical architectural needs and then, to his surprise, commissioned him to design the most important new building in post-Mao China.

True, Pei had not been a defector. Nor had he been an active revolutionary. But this son of an ancient Mandarin family had departed overseas for his education and had chosen not to come home again to a China wracked by the Anti-Japanese War and then by revolution. Instead he had stayed in the United States to earn degrees from M.I.T. and Harvard and to become an architect of international distinction. Not the way China likes it. Both Chinas, the Imperial and the Revolutionary, prefer citizens to remain unhyphenated.

A few weeks ago the improbable became a reality when Pei's new building, a hotel in the scenic Fragrant Hills 20 miles west of Beijing, was opened for its first guests. What they saw was a tightly organized sprawl of white buildings, the highest only four stories, projecting on three sides of a Chinese-style garden blending into the October splendor of mountains rising to the south and west.

The austerity of the hotel's white walls was relieved by a running pattern of warm gray tiles, their geometry sometimes framing windows, sometimes defining architectural shapes. At first glance the whiteness alone is a surprise in China, but window shapes, paving materials, and the way indoor-outdoor spaces play against one another quickly asserts the Chinese-ness of the place and the man who is working here.

By his own admission Pei had a good deal more in mind than just helping China ease the hotel-room shortage.

"I am trying," he said, "to create a new architectural vernacular for China. I hope to give Chinese architects something to think about."

That he has done, but what they are thinking has not, as yet, been recorded, while long queues form to wander through the sky-lit lobby, the dining rooms, and gardens. Probably it will take a while for the subtleties and innovations of Pei's work to sink in and, alas, the Chinese have very little contemporary architecture for comparison, none of it distinguished, as far as I could determine on a recent tour through major cities. Their older hotels are monstrosities and the newer ones painfully similar to Holiday Inns or worse.

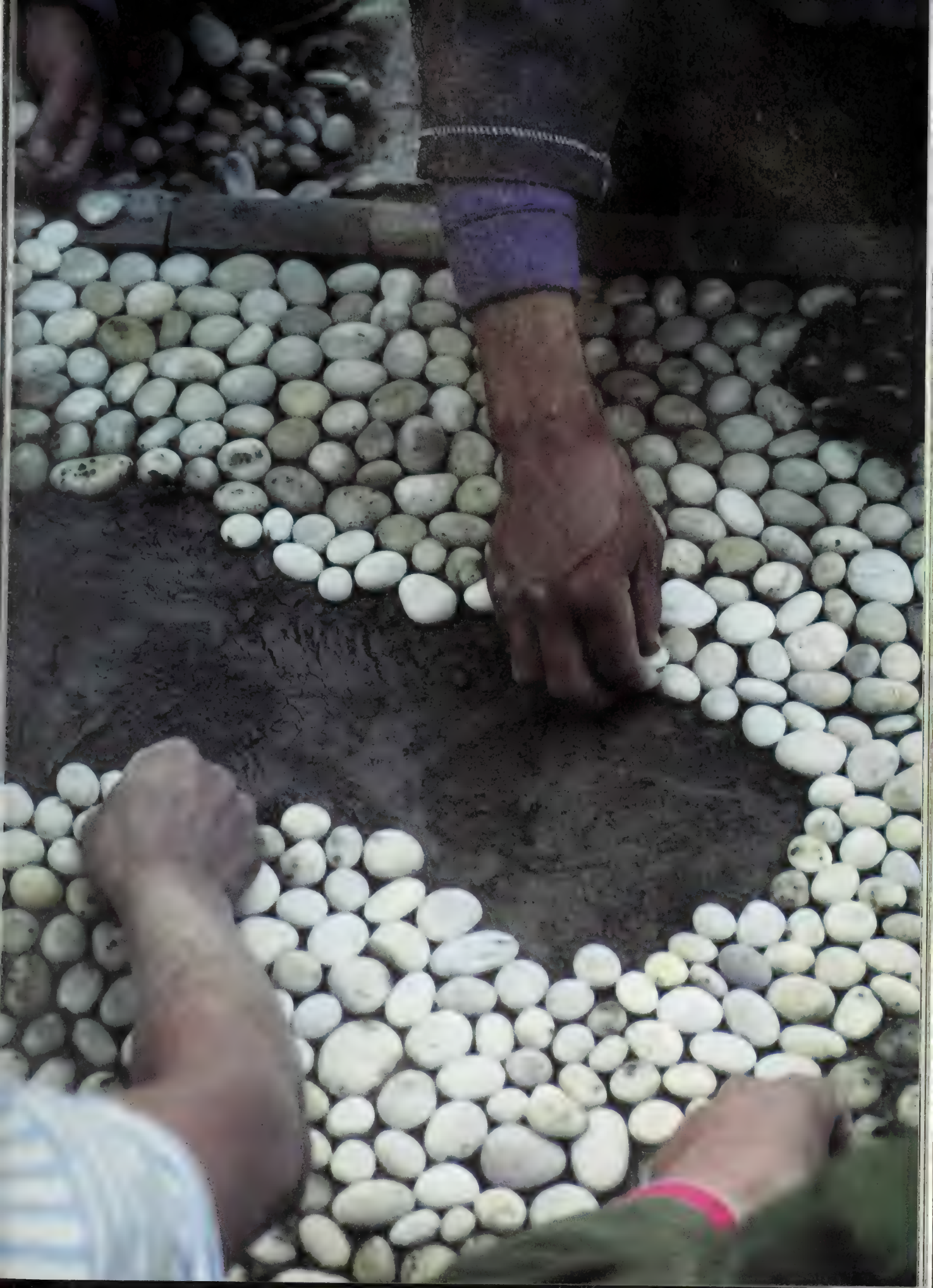
The Fragrant Hill Hotel—*Xiangshan,* in Chinese—is built entirely of Chinese materials with the sole exception of air-conditioning equipment, partly to save money and partly, Pei says, "To show China it is possible to do wonderful things with simple materials—like those common gray tiles."

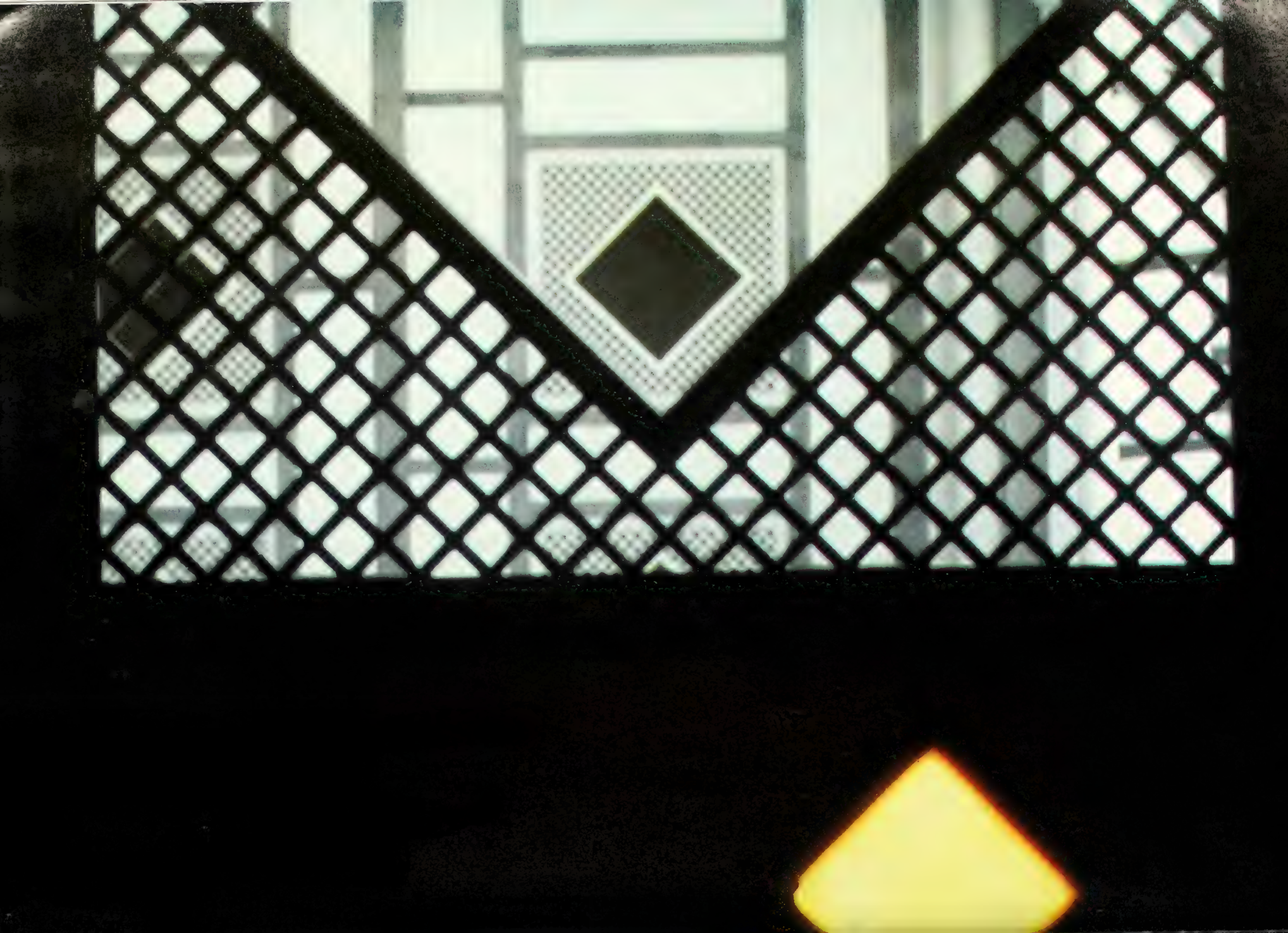
What sets the hotel off against his other buildings around the world is his manner of incorporating Chinese motifs and allusions to Chinese traditions. His architectural language is "a dialect of the country," the definition of vernacular. Enough, he hopes, to satisfy China's intense nationalism.

The insistence of his bureaucratic clients on Chinese-ness, as they called it, was the first surprise he had when talks started in 1978.

China was then entering an exciting new historical phase. The Gang of Four had just been driven from power. A new relaxation was palpable on every side. A whiff of freedom. The new rulers talked openly of China's need to modernize, to catch up and make up for the stagnation of Mao's last decade. Industrialization, science, and education were designated as prime areas for concentrating the national effort.

China, they acknowledged, would need help from her "foreign friends," a term used with deadening monotony all over China. Foreigners were needed for trade, for skills, and for the foreign currency *(Text continued on page 180)*









This page: Elderly ginkgo trees anchor the dramatic water-and-rock garden. *Opposite:* A modern steel-beamed ceiling floods lobby with sunlight.





AFTER THE SPRING

Come April a great American playwright finds himself in the vegetable patch once again — dreaming of a little morsel of meat on the vine

BY ARTHUR MILLER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY INGE MORATH

I have never understood why we keep a garden and why, 35 years ago when I bought my first house in the country, I started digging up a patch for vegetables before doing anything else. When you think how easy and cheap, relatively, it is to buy a bunch of carrots or beets, why raise them? And root crops especially are hard to tell apart, when store-bought, from our own. There is an atavism at work here, a kind of back-breaking make-believe that has no reality. And besides, I don't particularly like eating vegetables. I'd much rather eat something juicy and fat. Like hot dogs.

Now hot dogs and mustard with some warm sauerkraut—if you could raise *them* outside your window—you'd really have something you could justify without a second's hesitation. Or a hot pastrami vine.

As it is, though, I can't deny that come April I find myself going out to lean on the fence and look at that cursed rectangle, resolving with all my rational powers not to plant it again. It's not even economical any more with the price of seed so high now, and if I calculate what I have invested in a tiller and other tools, fertilizer, wire fence, and all the rest, it becomes ludicrous. I don't dare speak of my time and my wife's—which would figure out to be about six or seven thousand dollars per tomato—in good years.

But inevitably a morning arrives when, just as I am awakening, a scent wafts through the window, something like earth-as-air, a scent that seems to come up from the very center of this planet. And the sun means business, suddenly, and has a different, deeper yellow in its beams on the carpet. The birds begin screaming hysterically, thinking what I am thinking—the worms are deliciously worming their way through the melting soil. But it is not only pleasure sending me back to stare at that plot of soil, it is really conflict. The question is the same each year—what method should we use? The last few years we unrolled 36-inch-wide black plastic between the rows and it worked perfectly, keeping the soil moist in dry times and weed-free, and when we go off for a few days it's not hard to find our garden again, as it has been when we used to cultivate.

But, here we go again—black plastic looks so industrial, so unromantic, and probably gives cancer of the fingertips from handling it. And of course some people think it unfair to use black plastic because it does work so efficiently. Like the early opposition to the large tennis rackets. Anything that reduces suffering has to be a little evil. Nevertheless, I have gradually moved over to hay mulch, mostly because we cut a lot of hay and it does improve the soil's tilth as it rots, looks lovely, and comes to us free. But it needs to be very heavily laid on or you will have planted a hayfield, which we did one year, long ago. No less than six inches deep, unless you buy salt hay, but that costs so much you might as well eat salad in a restaurant.

Keeping a garden makes you aware of how delicate, bountiful, and easily ruined the surface of this little planet is. In that 50-by-70-foot patch there must be a dozen different types of soil. Parsley won't grow in one part but loves another and the same goes for the other crops. I suppose if you loaded the soil with chemical fertilizer these differences would cease to affect growth, but I use it sparingly and only in rows right where seeds are planted rather than broadcast over the whole area. I'm not sure why I do this beyond the saving in fertilizer and my unwillingness to aid the weeds between the rows.

I never spray anything principally

because insect damage and fungi have never affected more than a scant proportion of plants in this garden. I am not sure why it is spared except that it lies in the midst of a former hayfield where there is heavy grass growth, and maybe insects get enough to eat out there beyond the fence.

The attractions of gardening, I think, at least for a certain number of gardeners, are neurotic and moral. Whenever life seems pointless and difficult to grasp, you can always get out in the garden and *get something done.* Also, your paternal or maternal instincts come into play because helpless living things are depending on you, require training and discipline and encouragement and protection from enemies and bad influences. In some cases, as with squash and some cucumbers, your offspring—as it were—begin to turn upon you in massive numbers, proliferating more and more each morning and threatening to follow you into the house to strangle you in their vines. Zucchini tend to hide their fruits under broad leaves until they have become monster green phallic clubs to mock all men and subvert the women.

Gardening is a moral occupation, as well, because you always start in spring resolved to keep it looking neat this year, just like the pictures in the catalogues and magazines, but by July you once again face the chaos of unthinned carrots, lettuce, and beets. This is when my wife becomes—openly now—mistress of the garden. A consumer of vast quantities of vegetables, she does the thinning and hand-cultivating of the tiny plants. Squatting, she patiently moves down each row selecting which plants shall live and which she will cast aside. Tilling and planting having been completed, I excuse myself from this tedious task, for one thing because the plants have outgrown their grassy look and show signs of being lettuces. (Although on certain days unaccountably I like lettuce.)

At about this time my wife's 85-year-old mother, a botanist, makes her first visit to the garden. She looks about skeptically. Her favorite task is binding the tomato plants to stakes. She is an outspoken, truthful woman, or she was until she learned better. Now, instead of saying, "You have planted the tomatoes in the damp part of the garden," she waits until October when she makes her annual trip to her home in Europe; *(Text continued on page 183)*





Why would a woman buy a house sight unseen and then move 3,000 miles to live in it? The remarkable Alice Larkin Toulmin did just that 60 years ago, to reforge her family's link with one of America's most fascinating and least-known historic houses

AN AMERICAN ROMANCE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHARLES WHITE





Preceding pages, left: Alice Larkin Toulmin (1879–1963) as a young woman in a dress by Worth. *Preceding pages, right:* In the living room of the Larkin house, built in Monterey between 1834 and 1838, a 19th-century French chinoiserie perfume bottle turned toward a mirror, as Mrs. Toulmin liked it.

"In the United States a man builds a house in which to spend his old age, and he sells it before the roof is on; he plants a garden and leases it just as the trees are about to bear; he brings a field into cultivation and leaves other men to gather the crops; he embraces a profession and gives it up; he settles in a place, which he soon afterward leaves to carry his fickle longings elsewhere." Those words written by the French social critic Alexis de Tocqueville almost 150 years ago remain a fitting evocation of one of our most pronounced national traits: mobility.

Since the earliest days of this country the prime cause of the seemingly ceaseless peregrinations of the American people has been financial opportunity. But Alice Larkin Toulmin, a remarkable New Hampshire–born woman who uprooted at the age of 43 and resettled in California in 1922, made her move not for money but for love—love not for a person but for a house.

As in the most compelling love stories, there was a wild streak of the irrational in what attracted her. However, although she had never seen the old adobe structure in Monterey that was to become her home for the next 35 years, she did indeed know it, for as the home of her grandfather Thomas Oliver Larkin it was a central component of her family's rich and proudly recounted heritage. Alice Larkin Toulmin picked up a thread of history that had been dropped from the warp and woof of her family tapestry, and in doing so tied together the loose ends of a fascinating American saga.

In proper legendary fashion, the builder of the Larkin house and for-

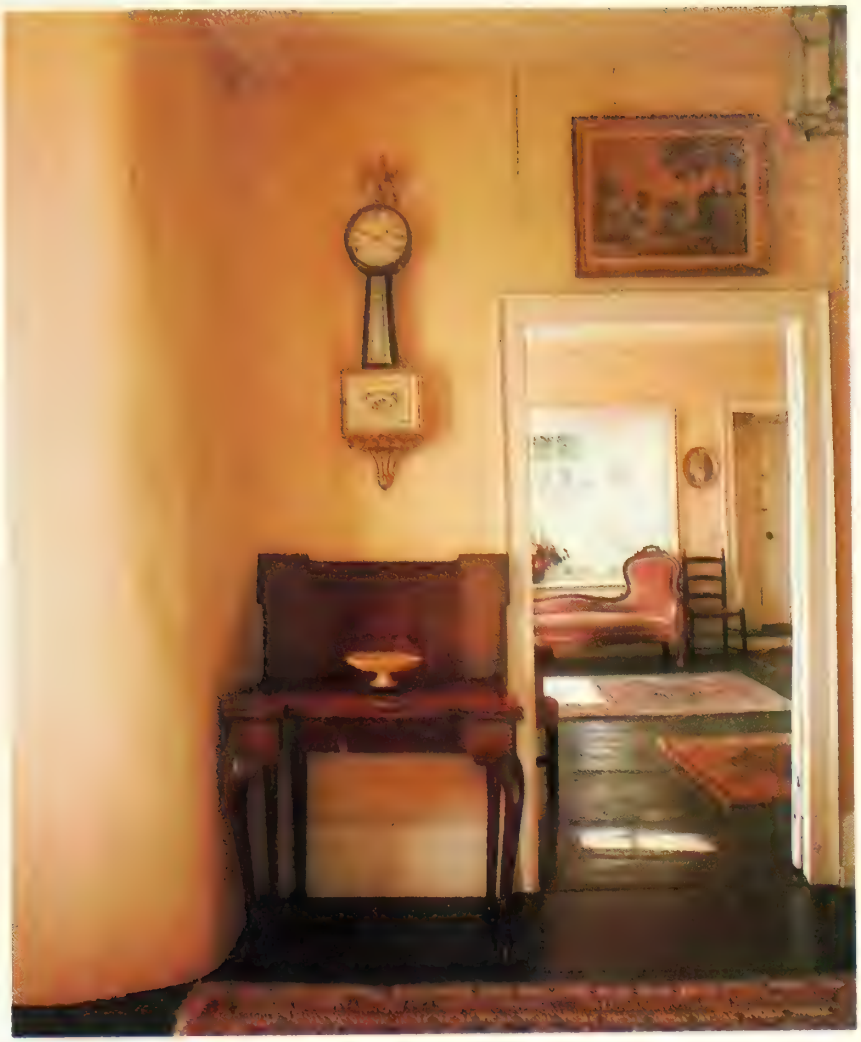


Right: The living room has redwood plank floors and an 18th-century Baccarat chandelier. Portrait over mantel is of Rachel Hobson Holmes Larkin, Mrs. Toulmin's grandmother. Chinese blue-and-white punch bowl filled with flowers on table in foreground was used to entertain George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette in New Hampshire in 1775.









Left. Next to a Victorian sofa in the living room, a French Empire mirror flanked by a pair of 18th-century Sheffield candlesticks. The basket of roses recalls Mrs. Toulmin's favorite flower. The flowers on these pages were arranged by Carrie Wright. *Above:* In the entry hall, the thick, curving adobe wall gives a bold counterpoint to an English Queen Anne card table and a rare American Federal banjo clock by Simon and Aaron Willard.

tune began life under adverse circumstances. Thomas Oliver Larkin was born in Charlestown, near Boston, in 1802 and was orphaned at the age of 16. After working briefly in the Carolinas, he set sail from Boston in 1831 on an arduous seven-month voyage around Cape Horn to seek a new life in California, which was then a territory of Mexico. But before his ship had docked in Monterey harbor, he met a recently widowed woman on board, Rachel Hobson Holmes, whom he fell in love with and married after a respectful year had lapsed.

In Monterey, Larkin worked for his half-brother (a sea captain turned merchant) until he was able to put enough money by to set himself up in his own business. By 1834 he was ready: He purchased a plot the equivalent size of two city blocks for $12.40 and began to build a sturdy adobe structure with a general store—the first in Monterey—on the ground floor, and living quarters above. As Larkin's business expanded, so did his family. Altogether, Thomas and Rachel had six children, and they gradually added other rooms to the house, which was more or less complete by 1838.

During the ensuing years Thomas Oliver Larkin prospered and became California's first millionaire. A respected member of his community, he also won the confidence of his country's government, which made him American consul to Mexico, a post that he

held for four years until the outbreak of the Mexican-American War in 1846. Aside from carrying out his official duties, Larkin also acted as a kind of confidential agent on behalf of the growing movement in California to secede from Mexico and join the United States, which happened in 1850, eight years before his death.

Thomas and Rachel's youngest son, Alfred Otis Larkin, inherited his parents' traveling instinct and settled back East as a young man. During his marriage he frequently left his wife at home in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and traveled extensively with their only child, Alice. Uncommonly devoted to her father, Alice Larkin remained unmarried until the age of 39, when, on a trip to India, she met an English military officer, Henry Wroughton Toulmin (Baronet of Childwick, St. Alban's, Hertfordshire), who asked her to become his wife. She did, and after several years of travel—Alice made some 30 long sea voyages during her life—she struck upon the idea of buying back her grandfather's house. She contacted the house's owner, Robert Johnson, the mayor of Monterey; startled by the inquiry, he rejoined with a sale price of $10,000, never expecting her to accept it. She wired him the money immediately.

By 1920, the Monterey Peninsula had been discovered as one of America's most idyllic places to live and had begun to attract new settlers drawn by the sheer beauty of the setting. Another woman who was enchanted with Monterey was the renowned Chicago interior decorator Frances Elkins, who moved there not long after Alice Toulmin. The two women became fast friends, and they collaborated on the decoration of the house that Harry and Alice Toulmin wanted to be a reincarnation of early California. To begin with, *(Text continued on page 116)*



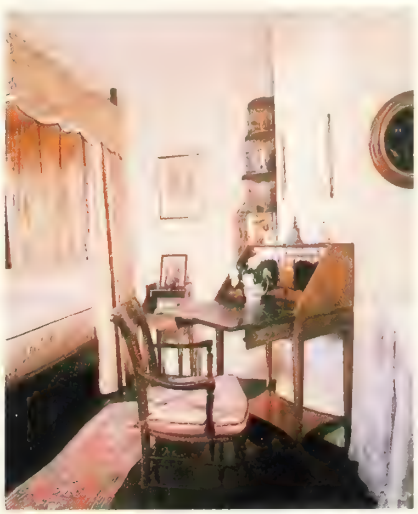
A magnificent Hepplewhite breakfront in a transitional "Gothick" style, circa 1795, dominates the dining room. An ingenious modular design, it can be broken down into 12 smaller components. The dining table and chairs are 18th-century English, the latter upholstered in a Scalamandré reproduction of the original cobalt-blue Chinese tribute silk. Table is set with Wedgwood china from the 1920s. Carpet is a Persian Mahal.







Opposite: A French Empire trumeau reflects the Rose Guest Bedroom. The small-scale tester bed and its flowered chintz hangings are late-18th- or early-19th-century English. *Above:* Across the hall in the Lavender Guest Bedroom, an English mahogany and tooled-leather butler's desk, circa 1790, is surmounted with 18th-century Italian urns flanking an 18th-century French inkwell. *Below:* A corner of the Rose Guest Bedroom, with an English satinwood lady's desk, circa 1790, and a 19th-century French decoupage *encoignure,* or corner cupboard.





there was great basic material to work with. The house itself is a superb example of the Monterey style at its most characteristic: thick adobe walls surrounded by a two-story veranda beneath generously overhanging roofs, rooms with lustrous wide-plank redwood floors and beamed ceilings, and an air of timeless serenity that unites several centuries of furniture and decorative objects.

The furnishings provide a saga in themselves. When Thomas Oliver Larkin was setting up his household in the 1830s, he ordered many of the components for his new home—mantelpieces, window glass, and furniture—from the East, and they were shipped the same way he traveled, "around the Horn." His granddaughter had it a great deal easier, though, when she made her own westward trek: Her furniture, enough to fill a boxcar, was sent by rail. *(Text continued on page 162)*

Right: The most exotic room in the house is Alice Larkin Toulmin's Chinese Bedroom, with the richly carved opium bed she bought in China in 1920. It was disassembled for shipping and reconstructed inside the room. Square teakwood table at bedside was bought in Thailand on the same trip. *Above:* Burmese teak, silver, and mother-of-pearl "spirit house" sits atop a serpentine-front chest of drawers.



THE LITTLE HOUSE OF FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART IS NOW THE PROUD POSSESSOR OF A RECONSTRUCTED ROOM BY AMERICA'S GREATEST ARCHITECT



BY MARTIN FILLER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NORMAN McGRATH

Frank Lloyd Wright is the hardy perennial of American architecture. Several times during his extraordinary 70-year career his reputation withered, but it always bloomed again, and the flower of his fame has not faded since his death, 24 years ago this month. In these times of architectural uncertainty, the work of Wright is both a reproach and a reassurance. It is a reproach to the contemporary architects who have lost sight of Wright's central contribution: the creation of a native American architecture that shunned the imitative, the sham, and the superficial. Much of what passes for innovation in architecture today seems to belie the fact that Wright ever lived. Alas, he left no major followers, for his titanic personality tended to stifle, rather than stimulate, creative thinking among his pupils, and much of his influence died with him.

But the reassurance is that Wright's recognition among informed laymen is still unparalleled; it is no coincidence that he is the only American architect besides Thomas Jefferson whose face has appeared on a U.S. postage stamp. Wright remains a touchstone, remarkably even more for the American public than for most architects, who are preoccupied with petty concerns that Wright heroically swept from the Augean stables of his profession beginning almost a century ago. Unfortunately, only about 10 percent of the approximately 400 buildings executed by Wright (most of which were private houses) are now open to the public. Furthermore, the heavy concentration of most of Wright's buildings in a few areas—in and around Chicago, Wisconsin, and Los Angeles—deprives many Americans of the chance to experience his architecture firsthand.

Now a room from a house by Frank Lloyd Wright has been installed at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art (only three blocks from Wright's last great work, the Guggenheim Museum), and it will provide more people than ever before with a sense of what his genius was really about. It is the living room from Northome, the sprawling country house Wright built for Mr. and Mrs. Francis W. Little on the shores of Lake Minnetonka in Wayzata, Minnesota, just outside Minneapolis, between 1912 and 1914, at the end of the first great phase of the architect's career. The house was demolished in 1972, and the room and its furnishings were bought by the Metropolitan for its American Wing. (Smaller rooms and elements from the house have been acquired by museums in Allentown, Pennsylvania; Dallas; Minneapolis; and Karlsruhe, West Germany.)

The display of historic rooms in museum settings has always been problematic, depending on a delicate balance between the inherent importance of the room preserved and the skill with which it is reinstalled. Questions of basic quality aside, the most recent 18th- and 19th-century rooms that were opened along with the Metropolitan's new American Wing in 1980 are particularly unsuccessful because of their lifeless ambiance, the result of false "windows" with painted "scenery," and the use of artificial light alone.

Luckily, the 30-by-45-foot Little house living room is situated so that one of its spectacular long rows of leaded-glass windows is flooded with daylight from a glass window wall of Kevin Roche's and John Dinkeloo's American Wing, perhaps the happiest outcome to date of their comprehensive expansion of the Metropolitan. Unfortunately, the other wall of the Wright room faces the interior of the museum, so the original effect of the room open to the *(Text continued on page 122)*

Above left: Frank Lloyd Wright, circa 1915, in a photograph by Eugene Hutchinson. *Opposite:* Northome, the country house of Mr. and Mrs. Francis W. Little, was built in Wayzata, Minnesota, from 1912 to 1914 and demolished in 1972; this is a corner of the living room, which has now been installed in the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.







The Little house living room looking toward the hearth, most often the focal point of the great rooms in Wright's early work. An accomplished amateur musician, Mrs. Little used the living room for her musicales. Anomalous for a Wright interior as ambitious as this is the solid-color central carpet; he devised a special floor design for this room, but it was never carried out. Some of the furniture was designed by Wright specifically for Northome, while other pieces, such as the print table next to the windows at left, were made to Wright's designs for the first house he built for the Littles in Peoria in 1903. The 40-foot-long row of windows faces a corridor that adjoins the glass window wall of the American Wing. This southern exposure admits natural light that adds to the reconstructed room's warmth, although in its original setting it had light on three sides, including the mirror-image row of windows that now faces the interior of the museum.



Opposite: Wright's Cra
Movement heritage is ty
ified by his sturdy golde
oak furniture, use
stained glass, display
objects on overhead she
and love of Oriental a
The table lamp with re
tangular leaded-gla
shade is also by Wright.
Left: Atop the print tab
(an ingenious Wright d
sign that allows for th
storage and display
oversized portfolios) a
copies of the famous 19
Wasmuth publication
Wright's work, a proje
the Littles helped finan
that had a decisive infl
ence on Wright's caree
and the course of mode
architecture.

"A HOUSE THAT HAS CHARACTER STANDS A GOOD CHANCE OF GROWING MORE VALUABLE AS IT GROWS OLDER, WHILE A HOUSE IN THE PREVAILING MODE... IS SOON OUT OF FASHION AND UNPROFITABLE." —*FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, 1908*

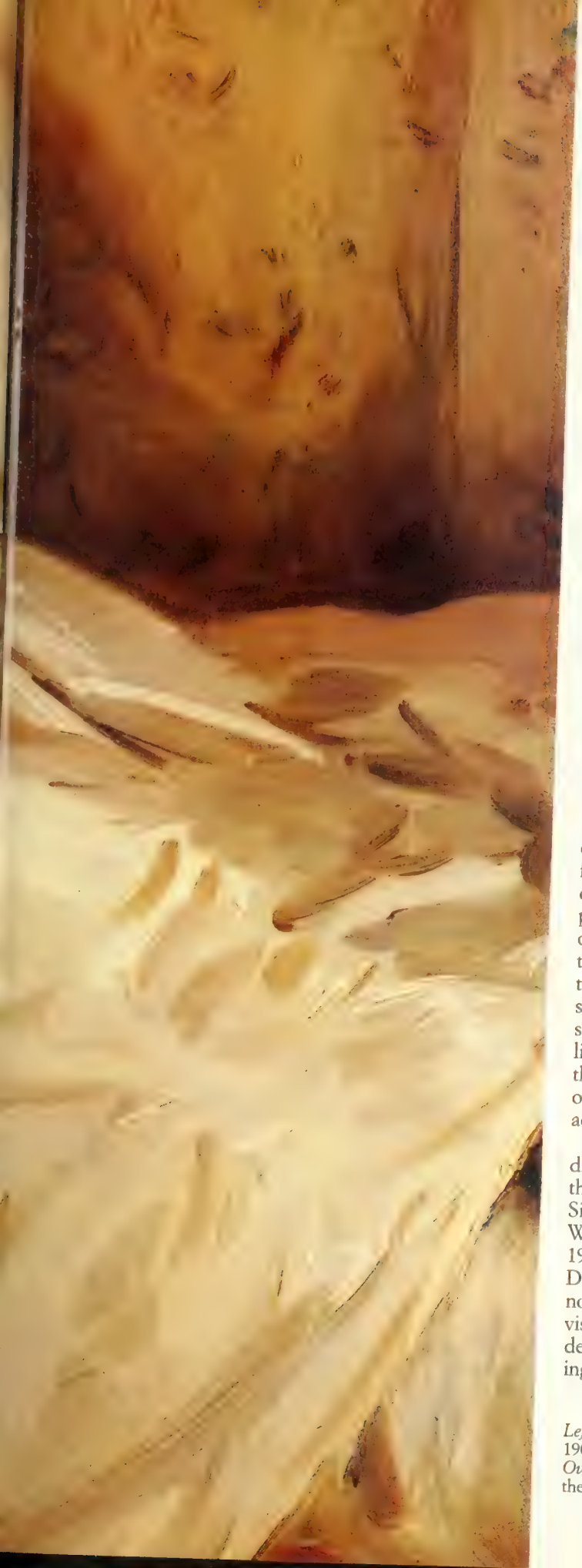
outdoors on both sides is lost; still, half natural light is better than none. Thus the animating presence of this light immediately sets the Little house room far ahead of most similar museum installations.

But just how major a work of architecture and interior design is the Little house living room? For its period it is quite impressive, but within Wright's whole output it is considerably less so. It does not occupy as important a place in Wright's career as the Metropolitan's dining room from Lansdowne House does in the work of its architect, Robert Adam. No historian has ever ranked the Little house very high among Wright's greatest achievements. In his excellent analysis of the room in *Skyline,* the eminent Wright scholar Professor Edgar Kaufmann Jr. (who is also the primary author of the museum's publication on the Little house installation) aptly described it as "basically presentable, with a Wrightian aura, not brilliant but clear."

Interestingly, it is precisely the room's shortcomings as a work representative of Wright that make it more successful
museum room than many of his greater interiors would h
been. The Little living room is a rather static rectangle, contr
to Wright's preoccupation with making architecture "br
out of the box." His most exciting interior spaces are those t
diminish the sense of orthogonal enclosure that we experie
in conventional rooms and have boundaries that are sometir
difficult to define precisely. Lewis Mumford called Wrigh
bold sculptural handling of architectural form and space in
houses at the turn of the century "Cubist a decade before C
ism," but the Little house room—symmetrical and self-c
tained—is more Classical than Cubist. Of course, any ro
removed from its original setting suffers to some degree
cause of its separation from a logical architectural context.
the cord, so to speak, must be severed somewhere, and in t
case it was an exceptionally clean cut, a deficiency turned int
decided benefit. *(Text continued on page 1*


WOMAN'S HOME COMPANION
THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
Collier's





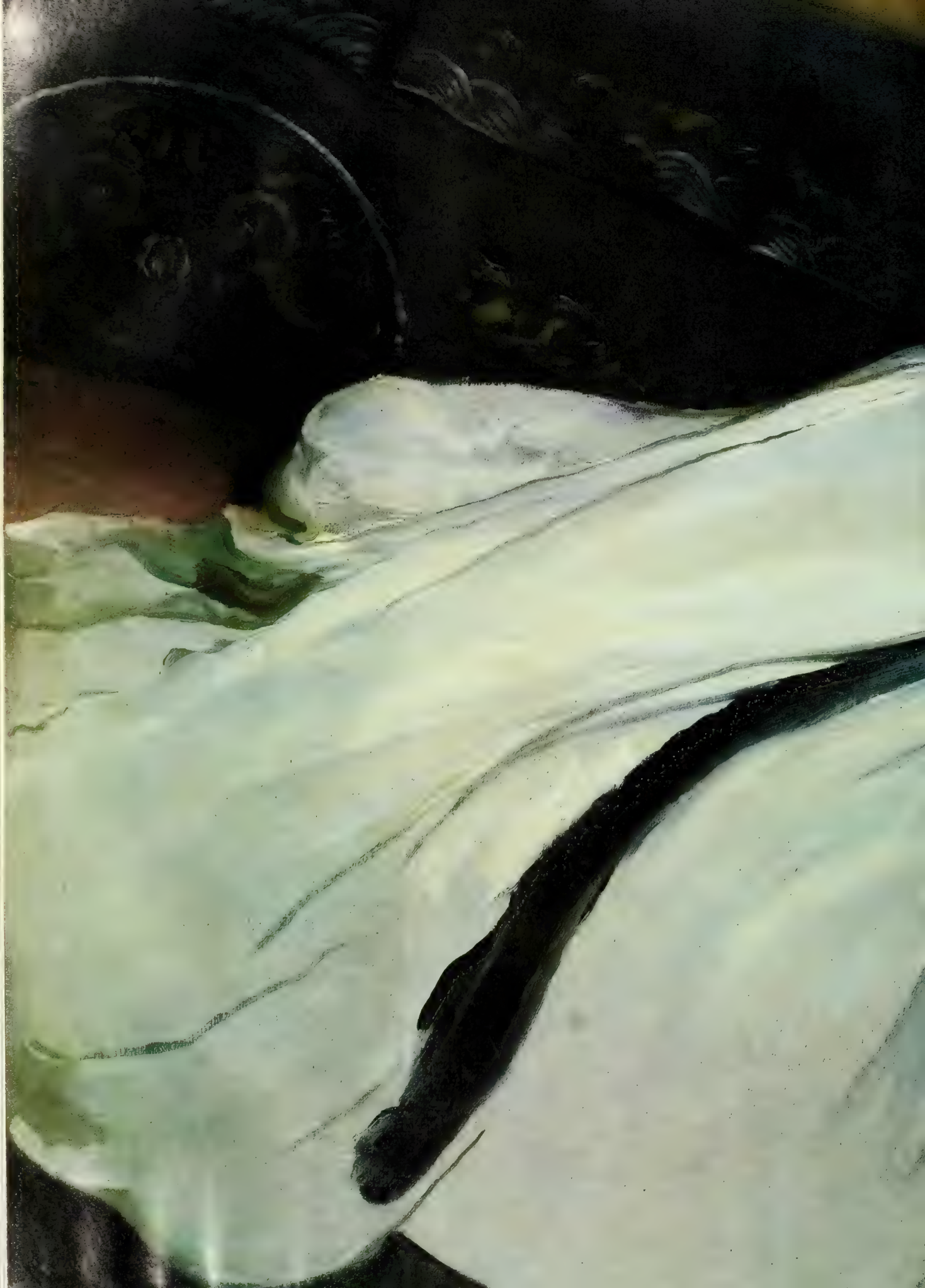
VISIONS OF LANGUOR

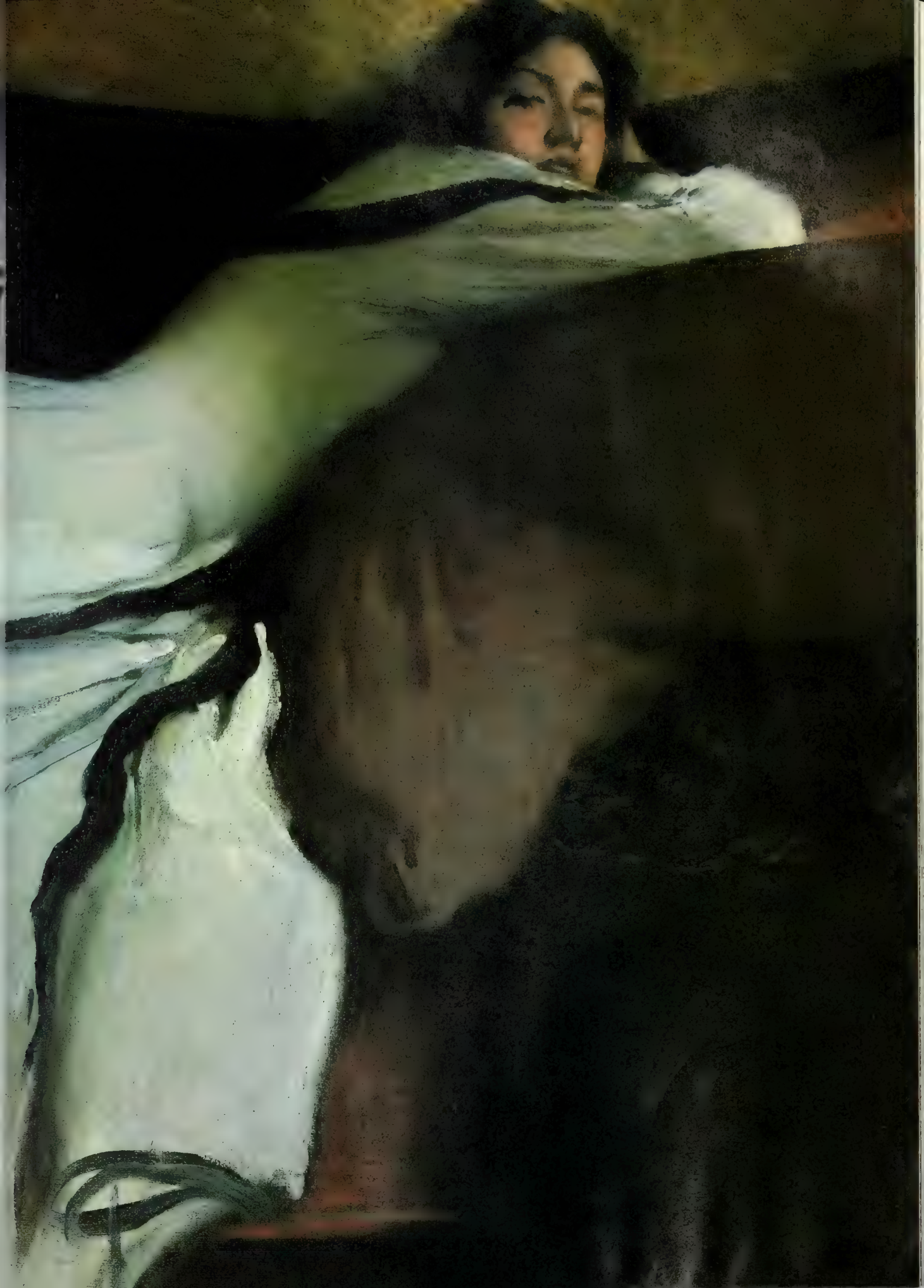
BY LINDA NOCHLIN

Repose! The very word has a nostalgic ring to it, conjuring up a vanished world of pale solitude, gentle distances, summer vistas, languor, and lovely women. The notion of repose clings insistently to the *fin de siècle,* when luxe and *calme,* if not *volupté,* were considered plausible elements of the good life—for the privileged few who could afford it. Certainly painters, from Manet and Whistler to John Singer Sargent and the less-well-known American John White Alexander, were enchanted by repose as a pictorial motif, the repose of pretty young women above all. Our current ideals of beauty and desirableness are so intensely dynamic, equated with jumping, running, kicking up the heels, stretching and bending in the photographs of fashion journals, our notions of success so stringently identified with frenetic action and assertiveness that it is hard to recapture the spiritual outlines of a world in which reposefulness, instead of being a kind of blasphemy—original sin in the feminine gender—was, on the contrary, considered a basic and charming feminine virtue. Repose today seems an outmoded concept, something women discarded along with corsets (for surely part of the pleasure of repose was the sheer relief of curling up on a chaise longue unlaced), with the idea of being a lady, and in fact, with the notion of just *being* rather than doing anything at all, as an admirable way of life.

Three paintings revive for us that lost condition of dreamy relaxation, offering visual equivalencies for the happy state of repose. Indeed, all three—John Singer Sargent's *Mosquito Net* of 1900, now in the White House Collection; the same artist's *Repose* of 1911 in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; and John White Alexander's *Repose* of 1895, now on view at the Metropolitan Museum of Art—are visually reposeful as well as being images of repose, designed to be undisturbing, mellifluous, and soothing in style and color. *(Text continued on page 129)*

Left: John Singer Sargent's *Mosquito Net,* 1900, in the White House Collection.
Overleaf: John Alexander's *Repose,* 1895, in the Metropolitan Museum, New York.





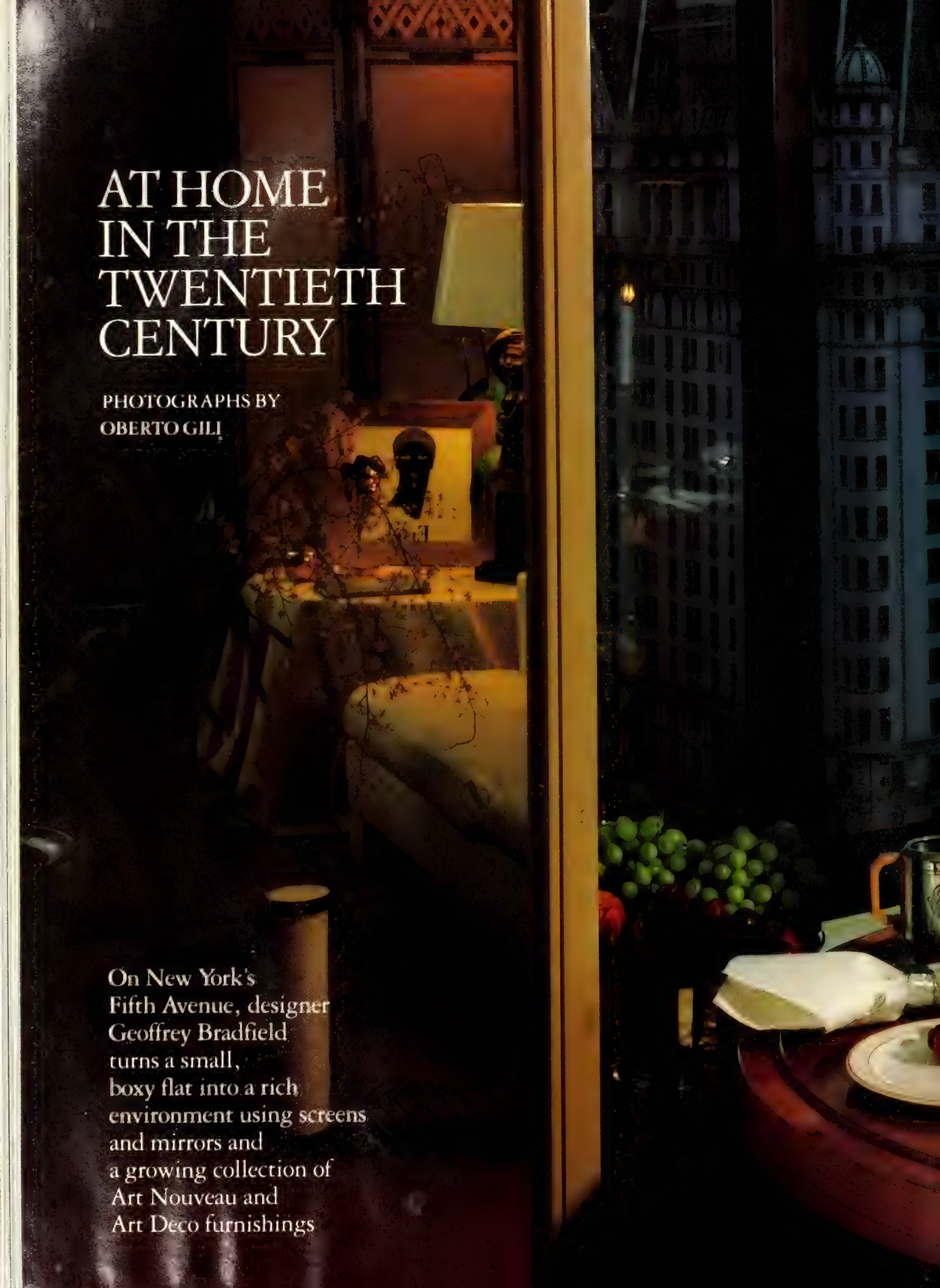




John Singer Sargent's *Repose* of 1911 in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

White is the color of choice for turn-of-the-century images of repose. Why white? Partly because of its natural association with virginal purity and classical timelessness; but more specifically, within the art context of the period, because of the precedent of Whistler, who in his various pictorial *Symphonies* of the 1860s and '70s had attempted to make visual art attain to the condition of music, to transform paint and canvas into an evocation as ethereal as a tone poem. A similar desire to escape the bonds of the material and the banality of narrative inspired the poet Stéphane Mallarmé to extoll the dazzling whiteness of the blank page, a field of snow uncontaminated by the heavy footprints of language. Whistler's *Symphony in White, No. 3* of 1865–67 provides a precedent for all three of our paintings: With its two meditative young women, one half-leaning on her arm on a banquette, the other kneeling on the ground with her arm outstretched in front of her, the canvas offered a seductive lesson in the aesthetic values of both whiteness as a color and repose as a subject to the most advanced painters of its time.

The connection of the color white, the motif of repose, and advanced aesthetic theory in Whistler's painting is central to an understanding of our three canvases, for the subject of the "repose" paintings of the later 19th century is the Aesthetic Woman *par excellence*. Both her white dress and her languid deportment serve to locate her psychologically and socially as well as artistically. The Aesthetic Woman is conceived of—perhaps conceives of herself—as a kind of visual poetry. She is a creature of intimacy, or at least is caught in an intimate condition, for no well-brought-up young lady of the period would slouch or loll about this way for anything as public and official as a commissioned portrait. Nor does repose, as embodied in the image of the Aesthetic Woman, have anything to do with sleep. The very title *Repose* makes the distinction clear: This is miles away from the coarse abandonment of consciousness, the gross *(Text continued on page 172)*



AT HOME IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
OBERTO GILI

On New York's Fifth Avenue, designer Geoffrey Bradfield turns a small, boxy flat into a rich environment using screens and mirrors and a growing collection of Art Nouveau and Art Deco furnishings



An interior designer raised in South Africa and taught his craft in London is now an enthusiastic New Yorker who lives at the hub of the city in one of its newest apartment houses. To furnish his rooms he sought pieces out of the recent past — American whenever possible — to build an atmosphere with complexity and depth

Some lucky Manhattanites live on the scenic riversides and around Central Park; others live with the view of another building, whose presence can range from dreary to spectacular. Geoffrey Bradfield's view is high on the spectacular end of that scale. He chose his New York City apartment because its windows open full upon the Plaza Hotel, a 1907 architectural monument by Henry J. Hardenbergh. Decorative, refined, and early-20th-century, the Plaza meets the requirements Bradfield establishes for most of the objects he collects and lives with, but the hotel building is unique among the visual elements of Bradfield's home because it is the only one he did not have to introduce himself.

Although the location is choice, the recently built apartment lacks architectural distinction, both in scale and detail. "Eight-foot-three ceilings are really no fun," Bradfield says, "and I had to struggle mightily against the small-box effect of the rooms." He is well equipped for the struggle, for as vice-president of the New York decorating firm of Jay Spectre, Inc., he deals quite often with new spaces that are initially featureless. With the company for four years, Bradfield finds the high quality of its design work enormously stimulating. "The stimulation when I decorate for myself has an added fillip—a strict budget."

Geoffrey Bradfield's family has farmed in South Africa since 1820, but he remembers being pulled from an early age into a different direction, design. His interest led him first to London, where he studied and worked. After a time, he decided to enter the New York decorating world. Bradfield—young, handsome, well-dressed, and well-spoken, with a lot of London in his personal style—is a natural optimist who is pleased not only with his goals thus far achieved but with happenstance as well. "I have no identity problem about my times. I love 1983. I love the moment. I love the 20th century."

Bradfield's affection for the design styles of our era reaches back 50 years and more. He is a serious collector of works of the Art Nouveau and Art Deco periods, especially the latter. "I feel that Art Deco represents our century. When the year 2000 comes closer and all the newspapers and art historians are summing up the 1900s, Art Deco is going to be a major focus."

As a future American—in two more years he will become a citizen—Geoffrey Bradfield, probably more than a native, takes a special interest in this country's decorative art. When a Metropolitan Museum curator suggested to him that his upholstered armchair was American Deco, not French, as the auction catalogue had listed it, he became even more enamored of the piece. Among his other American 20th-century treasures: a Frank Lloyd Wright cypress library table, a 1920 set of screens signed by Harer of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, four maple plank-and-fretwork chairs signed by John Bair, a Gilbert Rohde headboard and bedside table, and numerous Art Deco accessories.

The collection, along with some European paintings from the 16th and 18th centuries, creates the deeply personal atmosphere of the Bradfield apartment; the essential boxiness of the space was disguised in architectural ways. The designer employed tall panel screens and mirrors "to get rid of horrible corners and to add mystery and rhythm to the rooms." Sometimes he combined the strategies by cladding the screen panels in mirror. "I like it when a guest is surprised, often at the end of an evening, to discover that there is not another room in the distance, but a wall of mirror. People say, 'Good Lord, it's a mirror!' and I am delighted. If you're not careful with mirrors, though, you can easily end up with an MGM bathroom. They must be used economically."

Another decorative element Geoffrey Bradfield requires is "something to smile at," as he puts it. "When you come home at night during New York's dreadful long winters, you must have your spirits lifted." He mentions feeling especially warmed by the luxurious red early-20th-century Turkish rug and the Victorian day bed with its elaborate fretwork. But it is his total transformation of plain white volumes into rooms breathing sentiment and history that has given this talented émigré his spiritual lift. □

By Elaine Greene

Preceding pages: Watching the Plaza Hotel's lights go on is an absorbing suppertime treat. Table is French Art Deco; coffee service is American Deco. Flanking open window are mirror reflections. *Opposite:* Frank Lloyd Wright designed the cypress library table for the Auldbrass Plantation in 1939. The far wall here is mirrored, but one Flemish painting hangs against the mirror's surface. Mirrored screen at right is a Bradfield design.




Ertè



The entrance area is where guests usually dine. Dark walls give the space glamour and intimacy. Living-room rug is early 20th century Turkish; upholstered chair from the 1930s wears fabric of the period.



The living room as seen from the vicinity of the Wright library table reveals the amount of fretwork Bradfield uses to counteract the room's plainness. On Bradfield-designed coffee table, Art Deco smoking accessories. In right corner, 1920 signed Harer screen; one of four John Bair chairs. *Overleaf:* The Art Deco headboard and bedside table are Gilbert Rohde designs. Over the bed hangs a six-panel Byobu screen signed by Settan, who lived from 1778 to 1843. The corner screen, one of several, is a geometric Art Deco work adorned in silver and gold leaf. Chair is American Art Nouveau. Antique kilim covers the bed.


Erté







BY MARY SEEHAFER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY FELICIANO

MIX MASTERY

Decorator Harry Schule's very personal apartment is a freewheeling combination of the old and the new

A decorator's eye is quick to sum up just what's needed in a client's home, and decorator Harry Schule's first look at his own apartment was no exception. "There were two things I was itching to do immediately," says Schule, of Marshall-Schule Associates in New York. "First, put up portières between the living room and foyer—the doorway was just asking for it. And second, to mirror the entire fireplace wall," covering red bricks and banishing an old wooden mantel. That accomplished, Schule relied on wall-to-wall carpeting to bring his three small rooms together, even though the wood floors were in wonderful condition. Says Schule of his decision, "Besides being quieter than bare floors, light-colored carpeting was part of the finished look I had in mind for the room. It was a simple case of knowing when *not* to leave well enough alone."

Schule did leave well enough alone on the living-room ceiling. "I'd thought about continuing the grayness of the mirror with silver tea-paper squares overhead," he explains, "but after I'd lived here awhile, I realized the room really didn't need it." Schule glazed the foyer and living room pale green, then stippled over it with blue. Finding the effect too light for the old-stone look he wanted, he left the ceilings light, but restippled the walls and brought out the ceiling beams in the same way. "In New York, we live in boxes," Schule explains. "If your rooms have a little interest, why not show it?" The beamed ceilings and working fireplace in the 1930s building are perfect accompaniments to Schule's Elsie de Wolfe–like look—the result of years of collecting, and an evolving taste that has gone from "totally modern, to English country antiques, and now to more modern English pieces from the '30s and '40s, combined with very old and very new."

Indeed, Schule brings together old and new, priceless and not-so-priceless, with offhand confidence. His magnificent Coromandel screen is tucked into a corner of the living room behind a tree, "because it just seems right there," while another screen, less noble but graceful in stature, stands front and center in the foyer. "It's just a humble wallpapered screen," explains Schule with a smile, "but equally dear and perfectly

Opposite: Living room's Regency sofa table is also used for dining. *Below:* Portières frame a turn-of-the-century Steinway. Jardinieres from Ted Peckham Antiques.



serviceable. The pattern is wonderful, the colors are perfect for the room, and it's taller than the Coromandel so it's just the right height for hiding the kitchen door!"

In the same vein, living-room curtains and portières are both old and new, made from two different colorways of the same rainbow-striped silk. "I've had the curtains for years, and I needed wider ones for this apartment," says Schule. "They weren't making this fabric in the same colors any more so I chose the nearest thing to it, and now I have a bigger rainbow."

Living-room bookcases on either side of the fireplace were moved to the bedroom. This left perfect niches for a pair of Deco urns made of mirror and chrome-painted wood, which Schule found in Paris and restored. Uplights within spotlight each by reflection. Their pedestals were painted to look like stone. Schule says his little French chairs, the Coromandel screen, and *sang de boeuf* lamps are "the kind of things that look right in any room."

In the bedroom, the bookcases flank a leather-upholstered sleigh bed made especially for the space. During parties, the bed is covered with a fur throw and guests feel free to sit in this library-like space. Walls are cotton-upholstered, trimmed with hemp braid that blends with the woody tones of furniture and a collection of African masks Schule has been collecting since his modern days. "I loved them then, and I like them just as well with the antiques and Deco pieces I have today." □

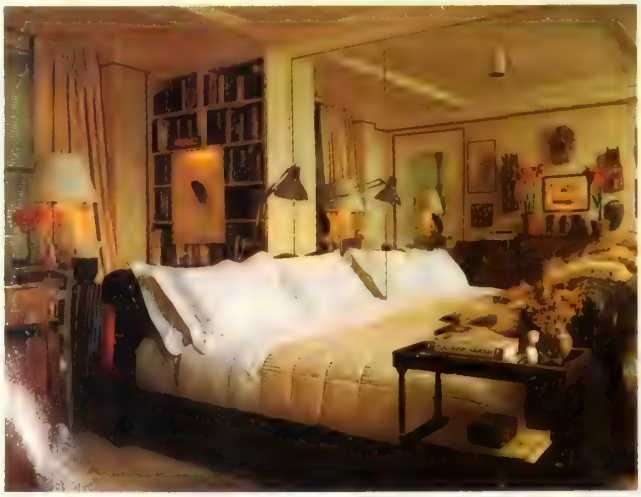


On the mirrored wall in the living room, Adam-style sconces and a drawing by Nick Carrone. Books too big for the bookcase are stacked footstool-style under the table.





Opposite: In the bedroom, Art Deco buffet, Biedermeier chairs. Enigmatic African masks include several Dogons and a Songe. Drawing and collage at right both by Marca-Relli. *Above:* Living room's balsa-wood temple and ivory masks are from John Rosselli. *Below:* Schule uses picture lights as soft illumination for a room. Linens by Pratesi.









Baroque Conceits

The garden at Marlia surrounds a villa with a fascinating past

BY JOHN RICHARDSON

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HENRY CLARKE



Preceding pages and above: Teatro di Verdura with Columbine, Pulcinella, and Harlequin of terra cotta in niches; aisles cut through topiary at left. *Right:* The Empire dining room with the ceiling painted by the Tofanellis.

Many of the world's finest gardens were conceived as enfilades of rooms opening one into the other as if they belonged inside rather than outside a palace or villa: the parterres of ancient or Renaissance Rome, the gardens of the Ming or Mogul dynasties, and Edwardian layouts by Edwin Lutyens and Gertrude Jekyll, whose "rooms" walled in yew or brick were connected by herbaceous bordered "corridors" of gravel. But to my mind the most magical manifestations of this humanistic approach to gardening—nature metamorphosed into a series of "ideal" settings for man—are the baroque water gardens around Florence and Lucca, where streams from neighboring hillsides keep countless fountains and fish ponds fed.

Of the many Lucchese gardens, the beautifully preserved baroque ensemble at Marlia is the masterpiece. Georgina Masson, Berenson of Italian gardens, has described the main complex:

"[It] consists of a superb suite of garden rooms excavated . . . from [a] thick mass of trees. . . . A narrow passageway [leads] . . . right into what is surely the most magnificent garden room in Italy . . . some vast Baroque ballroom whose dancing floor is a great sheet of shimmering water. In this are reflected the dark clipped yews and lighter greens of the 'walls,' the gray stone of the balustrades and presiding gods and goddesses [in fact allegorical figures of the Arno and Serchio rivers, which flank a majestic Nymphaeum]. . . . A spacious flight of steps sweeps down from the 'ballroom' to the 'drawing room' of this enchanted garden palace, which is laid out with parterres of brilliant flowers, bordered by box hedges and potted citrus trees . . . while at the far end is a small alcove with a fountain."









Left: Pan's Grotto with trick fountains in the mosaic floor created out of local stones.
Above: Potted lemon trees on the balustrade and a 16th-century Nymphaeum with figures of the Arno and Serchio rivers.

If, on the other hand, you turn left in the open-air "ballroom"—where swans stand in for dancers—and take a narrow pathway lined with box, you will let yourself in for one of those sylvan surprises that baroque landscapists loved to spring. A simple wrought-iron gate hardly prepares you for a *Teatro di Verdura* contrived out of towering, knife-edged hedges. Grassy banks provide the seating, and there is even a topiary podium for conductors and topiary balls for the concealment of footlights. Life-size terra-cotta figures of *commedia dell'arte* figures—Harlequin, Columbine, and Pulcinella—that have been placed in niches carved out of the box backdrop reveal how the stage must have looked in the 18th century, when it was often the scene for *"maliziosi travestimenti"* ("mischievous travesties"). The spirit of the commedia dell'arte has a way of prompting even the stuffiest visitor to gallivant on this irresistible stage.

Beyond the main garden complex more *boschi* surround what used to be the Bishop's Villa—a charming 16th-century house, no longer inhabited—which was incorporated into the Marlia estate in 1811. Hidden away in the episcopal trees is a handsome 17th-century Nymphaeum, known as Pan's Grotto. Its finest feature is a floor embellished with elaborate pebble mosaics. Strategically placed in this floor as well as in the mouths and eyes of grotesque masks on the walls are numerous jets with which the bishops—traditionally addicted to *giochi d'aqua*—could drench unwary guests. Above Pan's Grotto is a small room for people to dry themselves and consummate new friendships.



Right: A multitude of tiny hidden jets releases a fine spray from the Grotto steps. *Above:* From the theater to the side of the house, a path through rooms created by three gates and topiary.

The name of the architect who designed these gardens has yet to be discovered, though a preliminary sketch for the open-air theater has been found in Prince Aldobrandini's archives at the castle of Celsa near Siena. Since this drawing is on the back of a plan for the pool garden at Celsa, and since recto and verso are in the same hand, it is thought that both projects were conceived by the same architect. More, however, is known about the patrons who commissioned the house and gardens: two enlightened brothers, Counts Olivero and Lelio Orsetti, who purchased Marlia in 1651 and proceeded over the next few years to replace the medieval castle with a villa and gardens in the two extremes of baroque taste—austerity for the villa, opulence for the gardens. Thus house and garden were a perfect foil for one another, and indeed still are, although the villa underwent a major metamorphosis 150 years later.

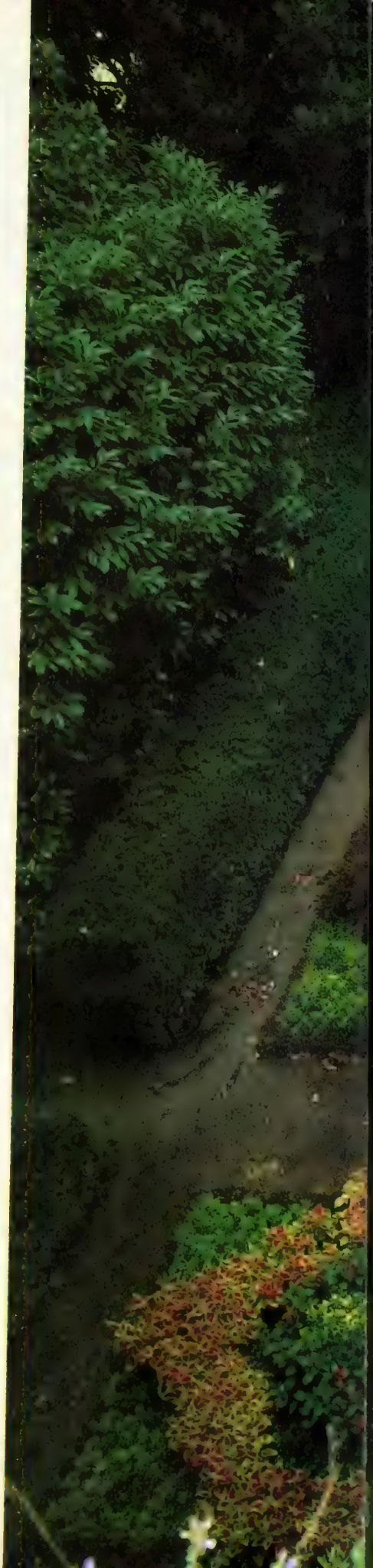
As the 18th century drew to its stormy close, many of the finest baroque gardens in Tuscany were destroyed not by war but by a change in taste for the "picturesque" and "natural" look of English parks in the style of Capability Brown and Humphry Repton. Marlia was spared, at least until 1806. In that year Napoleon transformed the small state of Lucca into a principality for his sister, Elisa Baciocchi, or "The Semiramis of the Serchio," as Talleyrand dubbed her (after the local river). A principality necessitated a princely residence—something along the lines of Napoleon's Malmaison—and so Elisa forced Count Orsetti to sell her Marlia. On being promoted five years later to Grand Duchess of Tuscany, she expropriated property for miles around with a view to creating an ambitious *parc à l'Anglaise* (designed by Morel who had *(Text continued on page 158)*





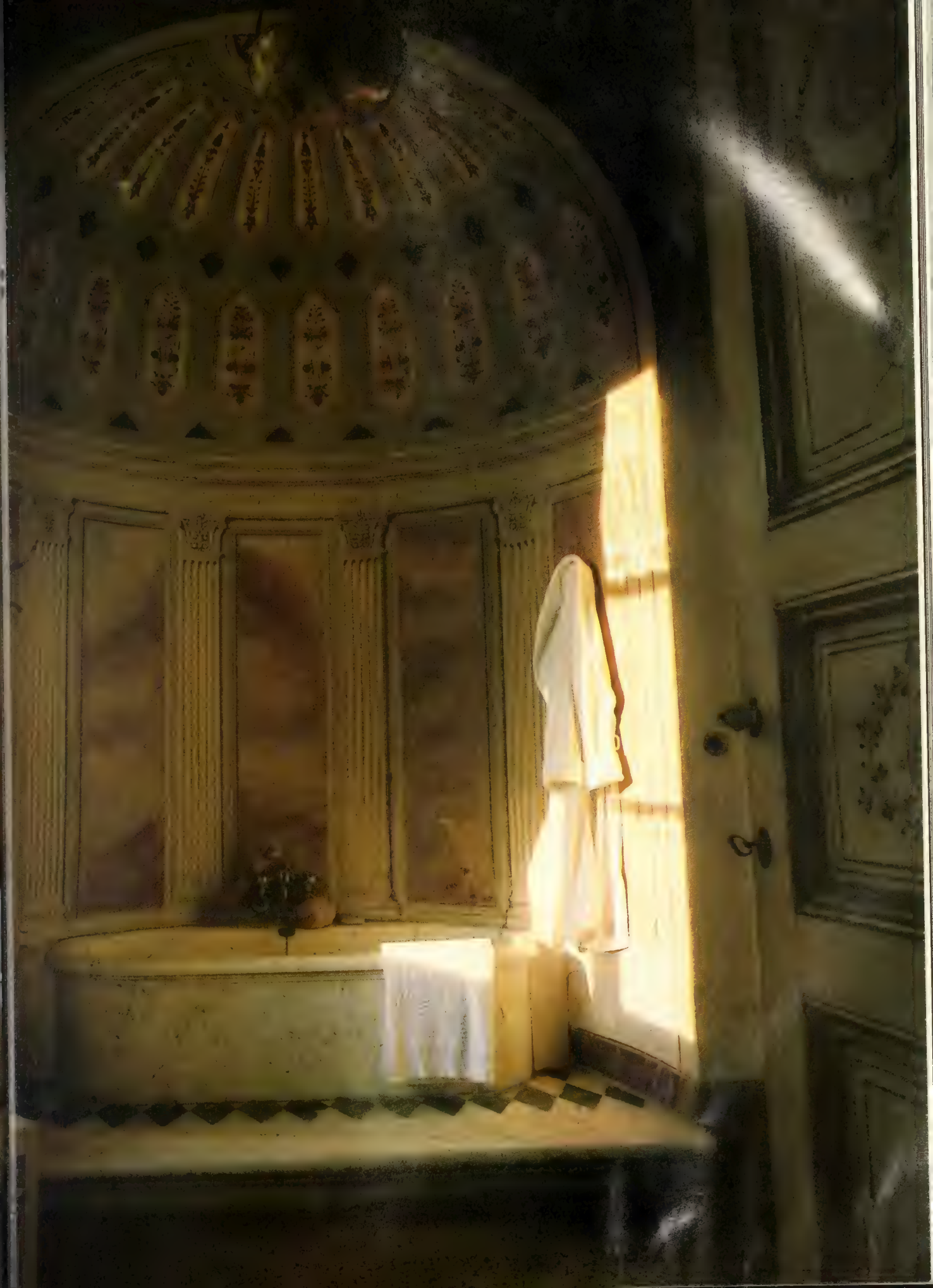
Right: Bishop's Villa garden of foliage.
Above: An Empire bed with a mosquito net; wallpaper of Cupid and Psyche after original by Proudhon. *Below:* Front of the house against the mountains of Lucca.
Overleaf: A marble bust of Elisa Baciocchi; a painted ceiling in the bathroom.











A simple wrought-iron gate hardly prepares you for the *Teatro di Verdura*'s towering, knife-edged hedges. Grassy banks provide seating, with a topiary podium for conductors

(continued from page 152) landscaped Malmaison. There were to be flocks of merino sheep and glades of magnolia trees. But Elisa's days were already numbered. In 1814 a detachment of English soldiers under Lord William Bentinck removed the upstart from her rickety throne—fortunately before she could invoke the name of nature and do away with Marlia's baroque gardens altogether.

According to Harold Acton, Elisa "modeled her court on that of Saint Cloud with ladies-in-waiting, chamberlains, equerries, pages, chaplains, and almoners with resounding titles, ruling public and private ceremonies with the solemn frivolity of a Ruritanian musical comedy. It was almost the parody of Napoleon's court." And when she wasn't cutting a preposterous figure reviewing her handful of troops, Elisa would organize entertainments—Racine's *Phèdre,* for instance—in the topiary theater. She also fancied herself a judge of music and doted on Paganini, who was her musical advisor. Since cadenzas made the princess feel faint, her Imperial Highness reclined on a chaise longue while Paganini played his capriccios behind a hedge.

For all her attempts to naturalize the gardens, Elisa can be said to have improved the baroque villa. She added a story to the house and had Théodore Bienaimé come from Paris to redecorate everything, not least her bathroom, in the French, as opposed to the Italian, Empire style. She also employed local artists in the form of the Tofanelli brothers to fresco various rooms, including the new ballroom with a "Dance of the Hours" ceiling. To Elisa's credit it must be said that her Neoclassical additions blend remarkably well with the baroque bones of the house.

Marlia was fortunate in that Elisa's successor, Maria Luisa, the rightful Duchess of Lucca, made no changes to the house or gardens, nor did her eccentric, reclusive son. Nor did the next incumbents: the Prince of Capua's morganatic wife—an Irishwoman—and her mad son, who died at age 83 in 1918. Thus Marlia slumbered into the 20th century.

And then in 1923 an enterprising patron of the arts acquired the dormant royal villa, and with the help of his brilliant wife devoted the next few years to bringing it back to life. Not only money but taste and imagination were in abundant supply. The great rooms inside the villa were soon restored to their Empire splendor, the gardens to their baroque glory. There was only one major concession to modernity and that was an Olympic-sized pool discreetly tucked away in its own garden enclosure. To the owners' surprise this required special approval not from the *Belle Arte* but the ecclesiastical authorities. Sixty years ago private pools were anathema to the Catholic hierarchy for all the baring of flesh that they encouraged.



Bougainvillaea and potted lemon trees along the path to a fountain.

Under private ownership Marlia continued to live up to its 19th-century name of Villa Reale (Royal Villa). However, the new proprietors' court—for court it was—glittered far more brightly than Elisa Baciocchi's with artists and writers, actors and musicians, stars of every kind. And to this day the multifarious interests of the proprietors' family ensure that Marlia has remained a house where prelates and pop singers, poets and politicians, tycoons and children find themselves equally at ease.

Despite soaring costs, increasing dilapidations, and a staff the tenth of what it formerly was, Marlia has survived as a functioning private house because the family has a great sense of responsibility and is still prepared to make the heroic sacrifices that ownership of a national monument in Italy entails. Imagine what would happen to the gardens—which are open to visitors during the summer months—if the public-spirited proprietors were not there to cherish them.

A few summers ago I stayed at Marlia and will never forget opening my bedroom window early one morning and seeing the vast baroque fountain at the end of the garden vista materialize through the haze; and then watching the head gardener, Antonio—a genius at arranging things as well as growing them—weaving *boules de neige* and jasmin into garlands and fuchsia into fringes with which to decorate a canopied table on the terrace. This was a skill I thought had vanished at least a century ago. Nor will I forget dining under Antonio's floral canopy in the summer dusk—the smell of the olea trees, the flash of fireflies, and the nightingales eclipsed by gales of badinage. □

John Richardson is the author of books on Manet and Picasso.

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(Continued from page 66) the practice of art revolves around faith. The artist, stirred by the miracle of life, presumes that his response will have some value. But I am well acquainted with the sensations that must have invaded my coworkers in this project when they were faced with bolts of textiles and the many colors I chose for the vestments. They must have felt the way I often feel facing an untouched white canvas. My act of faith consists of my trust that what will emerge from the brushstrokes, my transposition of reality, will communicate even more than the pure, white canvas. That is not an easy assumption to make; it is a great presumption. Yet every true artist must eventually face the fact that art is a presumptuous undertaking. The artist not only gives testimony to his passion for life, but he has an unreasonable confidence that his statements will convey his deepest convictions and that these convictions are worthwhile conveying.

For centuries of Western civilization, the finest artists were employed by churches. Unfortunately, this has rarely been true in the United States. Since the beginning of our history, the people of our country have found it difficult to relate our arts to our churches. This is probably not entirely the fault of our churches. Relatively few American artists have been gifted with exemplary religious sensibility. And in recent times, it was not until the vision of abstract art matured that the modern artist began to relate the means of abstraction to deep, spiritual concerns. Today I sense that many serious artists would welcome cooperation with the churches, for many of them suffer from a feeling of irrelevance in American society.

This is not the time or place to consider the history of Christian art. Suffice it to say that what has been called "modern art" signaled the collapse of a materialistic world view, a view that had dominated Western civilization since the Renaissance. In today's new physics, in the decomposition of form in painting and sculpture, in the dissolution of traditional syntax in literature, in the breach with long-accepted tonal systems in music, we have been presented with a new set of affirmations. Though we are increasingly aware of the threat to human existence posed by the still-exacerbated materialism of our technology, we must believe that hope exists for our future. This hope is what the best contemporary artists affirm; that is why I call contemporary art the art of hope.

In the vestments for St. James, primarily in the chasubles and altarcloths, I used a continuous line in my design. This permitted me to delineate the forms I had in mind, using a single color that complemented the hue of the vestment. This line could also convey the kind of rhythm and movement I wished. These were the aesthetic reasons for the unbroken line; yet when I questioned whether there were other reasons for my choice of that kind of line, I realized that it symbolized the continuity of the church—a 2,000-year flow of nourishment from Western civilization's spiritual source.

White, red, green, and violet are, of course, the church's required colors for various seasons; each has its symbolic purpose. The white vestments serve generally for the happy festivals, those that represent the manifestations of the Lord. Every such event seems to me to be an explosion of illumination emerging from the Cross itself; a burst of revelation I symbolized by light emerging from the blazing vermilion Cross. No image so utterly simple has so many diverse meanings. In the white vestments it symbolizes the source of a burning light, just as the stars at night reflect the sun's light in the shape of a cross.

For the red vestments, used in the more tragic festivals, I chose a deep red to remind us of the blood of the Saviour and of our possible communion with him. Here the Cross symbolizes the Crucifixion. It is such an immediate symbol of the Crucifixion that it is not always necessary to place Jesus upon it. In my vestments it is black to represent the darkness, the terror of that event. The lines that flow around the black Cross are abstract representations of Cherubim and Seraphim; their color is the deep blue of the upper firmament; their form is derived from Eastern icons that used strange, bodiless human heads with four large wings that suggest the mysterious power of pure spirit, and they are the guardians of its threshold.

The vestments for ordinary time are perhaps green because green is the omnipresent color in the natural world. Less now, unfortunately, than it used to be; but it still represents daily life and growth as we would wish it. The Cross is a blue close in intensity to the green of the earth. It can symbolize two paths that, in the vernacular, one could say are at cross purposes, but through Christ's teachings they meet in the center. The red line is of a hue exactly complementary to the green of the background. It was chosen not only for its dramatic contrast but because the angels' wings or the wings of the Dove that it represents are the complement to daily life, are the force that can transmit us to the heavenly blue.

Violet vestments are used in times of reflection, silence, and waiting. A deep rich purple, not a gay or bright violet. During these times the hidden mysteries of the church may be unveiled. We contemplate the revelations of Christ and His coming. The yellow of my line suggests the light given by such contemplation. At the foot of the Cross bowed, worshipping, or sleeping are the Apostles who brought us His message. You may be able to discern their heads, their bent, praying forms mingling with each other at the feet of Jesus. Perhaps this is more apparent on the altarcloth.

I used on the altarcloths whatever forms I had developed for the chasubles, varying them only to conform to the different shape and size of the altar. The symbols on the stoles, the burses, the veils, and pulpit hangings are traditional and need no further elucidation.

I hope my words will suggest that I approached the design of the vestments with great respect, humility, and devotion, sharing with the parish not only the making of the vestments but also an ideal and a faith in the human community. □

Paintings by Cleve Gray are in many museums, among them the Metropolitan Museum in New York, the National Collection in Washington. He is represented by Betty Parsons Gallery.

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In entry hall, a 1789 leather fire bucket owned by A. O. Larkin sits on floor, at left.

(*Continued from page 116*) What is most remarkable, however, is that many of those pieces were making their second continental transit to the same destination, for Alice had inherited the very furniture that her grandfather had brought to Monterey almost a century earlier. She thereby proved not only that you *can* go home again, but that you can do so even if you've never been there before.

The background that Alice Toulmin and Frances Elkins devised to show off those treasures (and the more recently acquired objects that Alice and Henry had bought on their post-nuptial travels) represented a new attitude toward decorating with antiques. For one thing, by the 1920s, antiques—especially American pieces—had begun to be appreciated as works of art and not just as curios. The Victorians would have prized an heirloom clock or a Pilgrim chest more for its historical associations than for its aesthetic quality. Furthermore, such pieces would most likely have been lost in the welter of bric-a-brac and heavily patterned floor- and wallcoverings of typical turn-of-the-century interiors.

All that had changed with decorators of Frances Elkins's generation. Although the rooms of the Larkin house are by no means bare, they are much closer in feeling to the way most interiors are decorated today than to the way they were when Alice Larkin was a girl. Soft but clear solid background colors predominate, with a special emphasis on the romantic pastels; rose, lavender

apricot, and pale blue give the rooms of the Larkin house a slightly old-fashioned (but certainly not musty) atmosphere. And although there are a number of extremely fine pieces throughout, there is also a scattering of souvenir bibelots, hovering halfway between art and trinket, that are a characteristic component of upper-class interiors of the period. These mementos of Alice's travels give the rooms of her house a genuinely human air and remind one of a simpler, more innocent time when personal collections tended to be expressions of momentary enthusiasm and not always a manifestation of a ferociously informed sensibility.

Saying that Alice Larkin Toulmin was "house proud"—to use an evocative phrase of that period—is putting it mildly. When Henry Toulmin died shortly before she gave the house and its contents to the state of California in 1957), she was reputed to have said, "Well, now no floozy will get my breakfront," referring to the majestic Hepplewhite piece that still dominates the dining room. This odd remark, however, was perhaps less an indication of her feelings toward her late husband than an expression of attachment to the heirlooms over which she had become a most jealous custodian.

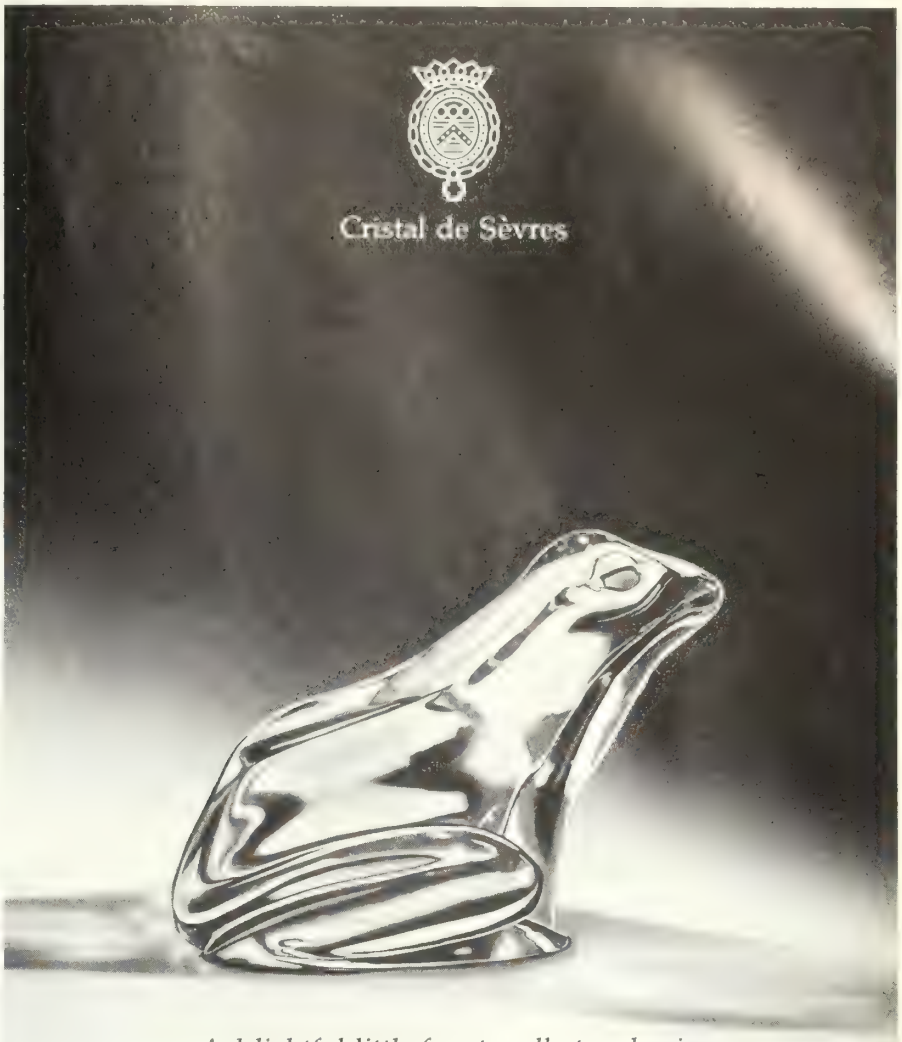
It is no surprise, then, that Alice Toulmin finally gave her house to the public. If she herself could not always have it, she must have reasoned, then it should become the property of all the people, rather than that of any single person—or posthumous rival. If she could not take it with her, then at least she could—as much as was possible—ensure that the house took her with it. She succeeded, for her house still possesses that elusive quality found only rarely in historic houses: humanity. The Larkin house is virtually alive with it, not because of its remarkable history, or its splendid furnishings, but because of the passion breathed into it by a woman with a love for her home. □

By Martin Filler

Correction: In the February 1983 issue, on page 108, the bed linens were miscredited: They are by Pratesi.

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The three owners, center, backed up by their chefs

FÊTE ACCOMPLI

Glorious Food caters to a full house with enticing meals and imaginative showmanship

By Jason Epstein

A basket of red gloxinia on the window sill catches the morning light. At diagonally opposite sides of a table are two white plates. On each plate there is a poached egg and as the adjacent recipe explains, the eggs are sitting on a base of artichoke bottoms filled with carrot purée. The reader is advised that because artichoke bottoms won't turn soggy they make a better base for poached eggs than the usual muffins. Each egg is covered with a pink beurre blanc made of blood oranges and pink champagne. A glass of pink champagne stands beside each plate.

But there are no people in this picture, and the place settings, arranged so oddly at diagonally opposite sides of the rectangular table, will force the people when they finally do sit down either to twist awkwardly in their chairs so as to face each other or stare past each other like travelers on parallel tracks going in opposite directions. The one sign of life is a napkin, unfolded and left to hang over the edge of the table as if the host had taken his seat only to go to the door to greet a guest, perhaps someone who will occupy the other chair.

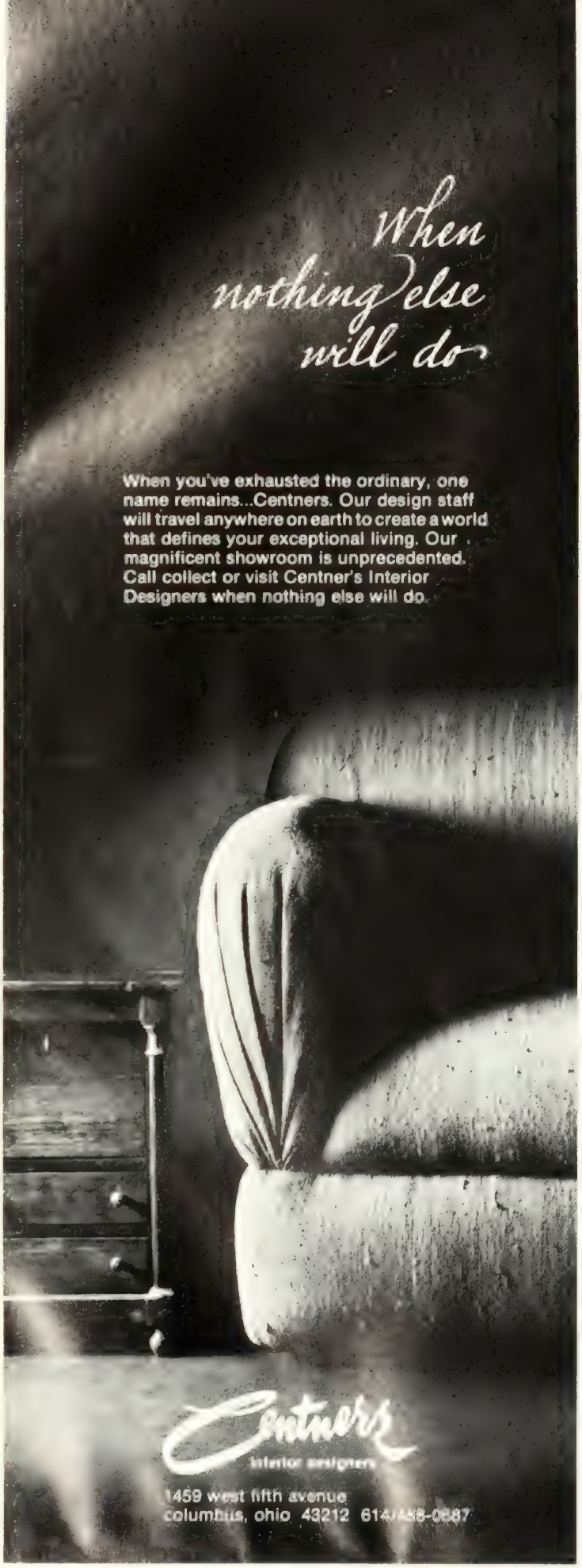
In fact there is no one at the door, nor was this elegantly surreal breakfast meant to be eaten. It was meant to be photographed, to feed nothing more substantial than fantasies of opulence and ease, to seduce with line and color and costly objects while proclaiming the ingenuity of the artist, like the Arnolfini portrait or the windows at Bendel's. These sumptuous photographs by Richard Jeffery are meant to hold the gaze as in a dream, and like dreams they raise hard questions. For instance, what can this platonic breakfast have to do with what people actually eat in the morning?

Richard Jeffery's breakfast photograph is one of about a hundred that illustrate *Glorious Food,* an expensively produced volume that, according to the description on its dust jacket, provides "entertaining ideas, menus and recipes from New York's leading ca terer," a description both accurate an irrelevant, like calling the Taj Mahal house. *Glorious Food* is no mere party giver's manual, and it is also more tha a clearly written collection of recipe explaining how to make sometimes el egant, sometimes surprisingly simpl dishes for special occasions. It is a fash ionable object in its own right, an evo cation of ease and calculate extravagance that may tell future his torians something about ourselves a the idealized concupiscence of Frago nard's panels intended for Mme. d Barry tell us something about the cour of Louis XV.

Glorious Food celebrates th achievement of the caterers of the sam name who for the past 10 years hav been arranging parties in New Yor that are both elegant and blithe, ru with the precision of a high-wire act often in settings as theatrical as Jef fery's photographs. Sometimes it i hard to tell *(Continued on page 166)*



Mayfield Collection



"Glorious Food's parties are elegant and blithe, run with the precision of a high-wire act in settings both theatrical and dramatic"

(Continued from page 164) where these photographs leave off and the artful text by Christopher Idone, one of the founders of Glorious Food and the creator of its menus, begins. This, for example, is how the impresario of Glorious Food describes one of his creations, a tea party at a gingerbread house in Connecticut with "an empty turn-of-the-century greenhouse which could hold a hundred easily":

"Trees and ferns were borrowed from local nurseries and the flower designer supplied stencils of leaves and foliage which were quickly sprayed on the floor and lower walls of the greenhouse. The roots and soil of the trees were wrapped in white canvas duck and tied with gold rope. Pots of daisies were set in large baskets and tall white vases held magnolia and forsythia branches. Pale beige cloths, covered with white eyelet, draped the small tables. We placed a small cage with a pair of finches on each table while lovebirds in larger cages were suspended from the rafters.

"From four to six we would serve tea and tea foods. A trio of Juilliard music students would play and a friend would sing lieder and art songs. As darkness approached hundreds of candles would be lit and champagne would be served. The music would change to rock and the guests would leave at 9 P.M. sharp."

The abrupt departure at "9 P.M. sharp" makes a dramatic as well as a practical point. Idone's tea party was a piece of theater but Glorious Food is also a business, and in business as in art, discipline is everything. By nine it was time for real life again, time to pack up the chairs and tables, collect the laundry, shove the caged finches and the lovebirds in the back of the truck and get back to New York in time for a night's sleep before tomorrow's performance, perhaps the wedding on page 52 where "the tent was lit by paper lanterns that had been painted to match the other decorations," and where "in the late afternoon everything glowed pink."

In Jeffery's photographs actual people seldom appear, except for the waiters, mostly actors, who are themselves made to look like objects in a still life, frozen in mid-gesture. Only the shape of their hands visible through their white gloves reveals that they are really alive. But the frontispiece photograph of Christopher and partners Sean Driscoll and Jean-Claude Nedelec smiling outside their 74th Street atelier is something else again. Here are Sean, the major-domo, suave in a trim blue suit, with the air of a butler in town to see his wine merchant, Jean-Claude beside him wearing a chef's outfit, and Christopher to the right in what looks like a scientist's white lab coat, all three framed by an elaborately carved doorway that arches over them like a proscenium. What the eye goes to immediately, however, is Christopher's striped jogging shoes, the left one pointed boldly outward, drawing the viewer's eye toward the magical world within but at the same time asserting its claim to the actual New York sidewalk on which it rests. *(Continued on page 168)*

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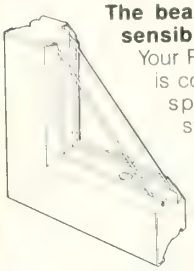




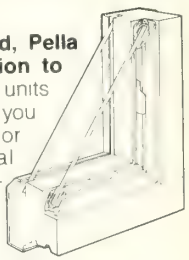
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(Continued from page 166) Ten ye ago when Glorious Food started business "we were smack in the mid of a recession," Sean writes in his pr ace. Now 10 years later we are in middle of a worse one, but Glori Food flourishes. Though one of th dinners will cost half again as much what you'd pay at a first-class N York restaurant, business is up by percent in the past two years and G rious Food currently caters between and 50 parties a week, having opene branch in Washington. About thr quarters of Glorious Food's clients corporations or banks or institutio like the New York Public Library the Metropolitan Museum, but cording to Christopher, "Everyo who entertains in this town enterta for business."

In Manhattan such entertainm has become an industry. Thirty ye ago when New York was the great manufacturing center on earth m than a million New Yorkers earn their livings in its factories making g ments, beer, sausages, books, and many other things that no one e bothered to count them. Much of t activity has long since gone, and wit has gone much of New York's prosp ity. But the illusion of plenty remai at least in central Manhattan, whic more vibrant than ever. One shudd to imagine New York without t glamorous vitality, no matter how il sory it may be, if only because so ma thousands of New Yorkers make th livings, as everything from busboys ballerinas, helping to sustain it.

At the bottom of the Great Depr sion Fred Astaire arrived in New Y in the movie *Swingtime* riding i freight car. His top hat, white tie, a tails were nevertheless spotless thou his pockets were empty except for lucky quarter with which he was ev tually to win fame, money, and Gin Rogers. Only a fool would have intru ed upon this fantasy to tell Astaire t in real life such things don't happ for in the real world such things happen. They happen in the mov and in this way they belong to histo if only to the history of illusion, same history to which Glorious Fo itself belongs. □

Jason Epstein is vice-president and editorial director of Random House.

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

(Continued from page 122) Wright ost often favored low ceilings in his ouses; some have claimed this was a sult of his diminutive stature, but in ct he preferred low ceilings because their greater intimacy, energy con-rvation, and the way in which they elp direct our spatial attention to the utdoors rather than to the upper aches of an interior. The 14-foot ceil-g of the Little house room is uncom-only lofty for Wright, who at his ients' request raised it two feet higher an his plans called for. And with its w of clerestory windows just beneath e frieze, its rhythmically placed strips f wood molding carrying the eye up-ard, and its luminous overhead pan-s of stained glass concealing light xtures behind them, the ceiling at-ins an almost magical hovering quali-. As installed at the Metropolitan, the om cannot be entered by the public; e space can be viewed only from just side doorways at either end of the om or peered into from behind the vo lateral rows of leaded-glass win-ows. From those restrictive vantage oints the unusually high ceiling makes e space seem a great deal livelier than ne of Wright's low-ceilinged rooms ight have.

Those issues aside, there is a great eal in the Little house living room to emind us of Wright at his most typi-al. First there is the color scheme. In is seminal 1908 essay "In the Cause of Architecture," a Thoreauvian Wright rged, "Go to the woods and fields for olor schemes. Use the soft, warm, op-imistic tones of earths and autumn eaves in preference to the pessimistic lues, purples, or cold greens and rays of the ribbon counter." He fol-owed his own advice here. The pre-lominant color is the tawny brown of he light-finished wood used for the loor, furniture, floor lamps, light fix-ures, framing elements on the walls nd ceiling, and the narrow shelf that extends around the room just above ead level. In full sunlight the room akes on a golden glow, but in more dif-use light it assumes a soft celadon cast. Wright also went to the woods and fields for the arrangements of dried leaves and berries that he favored, and those, too, have been carefully recreat-ed in the Metropolitan installation.

The furnishings and their setting are completely integrated, one of the most pronounced (Continued on page 170)



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(Continued from page 169) qualities of Wright's interiors and one that makes rooms designed by him almost impossible to decorate agreeably with any other furniture but his own. "The most truly satisfactory apartments are those in which most or all of the furniture is built in as a part of the original scheme considering the whole as an integral unit," Wright wrote. In the Little house living room he provided two 40-foot-long built-in window seats—a familiar component of Arts and Crafts–period interiors—from which one could look out onto Lake Minnetonka on one side and toward a wooded knoll on the other. It is hard to imagine a more inviting spot for curling up with a good book.

Wright, as usual, resisted the imposition of wall art by other artists. He firmly believed that "pictures deface walls oftener than they decorate them. Pictures should be decorative and incorporated into the general scheme as decoration." His exhaustively comprehensive interior design schemes did not easily allow for things he did not put there himself, and one suspects that thereby he made certain to prevent any extraneous element from claiming undue attention from his architecture. Not surprisingly, such art objects as Wright permitted were generally by long-deceased or anonymous artists, and were no doubt intended, by their catholic range, to stress the universality of his own architecture. Japanese prints were his great favorites, as well as Oriental ceramics and plaster casts of Classical sculpture (at Northome he used a reduced-scale version of the *Winged Victory of Samothrace*). And although Wright liked the selective punctuation that well-placed objects gave to his interiors, he was always careful to use accessories sparingly. He declared that "An excessive love of detail has ruined more things from the standpoint of fine art and fine living than any one human shortcoming—it is hopelessly vulgar. Too many houses, when they are not stage settings or scene paintings, are mere notion stores, bazaars, or junk shops."

The record indicates that all did not go smoothly between the architect and his clients during this project. The story begins in 1903, when Wright designed a house for Francis Little and his wife in Peoria, Illinois. When Little was made a vice-president of the Minnesota Trust Company and moved with his wife to Minneapolis in 1908, they again asked Wright to design a house for them, this time a country retreat. By then, however, the architect's personal life was in disarray. After 19 years, Wright's marriage to his wife Catherine was crumbling, accelerated by his affair with Mamah Borthwick Cheney, the wife of Edwin H. Cheney, for whom Wright had designed a house in Oak Park, Illinois, four years earlier. The scandal made Wright a social pariah, his lover a marked woman.

In 1909, with the financial backing of several loyal friends and clients, among them the Littles, Wright left his wife and six children and set sail for Europe with Mamah. There he sojourned for the following year, working on the preparation of *Ausgeführte Bauten und Entwürfe von Frank Lloyd Wright,* the portfolios of drawings of his architecture published by Ernst Wasmuth in Berlin in 1910. This project was responsible for establishing Wright's international reputation and marked the historic turning point at which European architecture began to be influenced by that of America, rather than vice versa. After returning to this country in 1909, Wright began the planning of Taliesin, his rural redoubt in Spring Green, Wisconsin, to which he moved with Mamah when it was completed in 1911. Not until 1912 did Wright take up the postponed project for the forebearing Mr. and Mrs. Little in earnest. But in the intervening years the architect had changed, and so had his clients.

As so often happens with patrons of art who have an artist's specific works in mind when they give him a commission, the Littles had envisioned a phase in Wright's development that he had moved beyond. Older, more successful, and more demanding, the Littles were not as receptive to Wright's proposals as they once had been. Mr. Little disliked the green glass that predominated in Wright's sketch for the living-room windows and had him change i Mrs. Little thought the living roo ceiling too low and had Wright raise i The new furniture pleased neither c them: They rejected a piano cas Wright drew up, and found several c the designs he actually executed not a all to their liking. The furniture ar rangement that Wright had specifie (faithfully replicated in the Metropoli tan's reconstruction) was abandone by the Littles soon after the house wa finished. Instead, they used severa pieces by Wright from their old house

Wright always provided his client with houses to live up to—that didacti belief of the 19th-century design-re form philosophers who had such an ef fect on Wright's outlook—and h never lost his conviction that desig should inspire people and help them t grow. That was not always easy for his clients, who occasionally must have longed merely for a house to live in. It would seem that the Littles had at least some legitimate cause for complaint though, as Edgar Kaufmann Jr. writes "The Littles remained captious and Wright, who felt indebted to them made concessions that chilled the de sign." Still, even in less inspired mo ments such as these, Wright was mile ahead of most of his contemporaries— and his juniors. His work continues t live, while that of many of his main stream coprofessionals has passed from memory. And his work continues to challenge, to provoke, and to teach. Above all, it proves that the enduring values of art and human experience are not those of style but of substance, not of appearance but of meaning, not of surface but of inner content. That is Frank Lloyd Wright's best bequest.

As Lewis Mumford wrote in 1929, "His architecture is not in the current of the present regime any more than Walt Whitman's writings were in the current of the Gilded Age: Hence his value is not that he dominated the scene and made it over in his image, but that he has kept the way open for a type of architecture which can come into existence only in a much more humanized and socially adept generation than our own." We still await that day. □



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"Their enclosed intimacy, their flower-like passivity recall the hothouse visions of earlier Orientalist paintings Westernized, updated, and naturalized, but harem creatures nevertheless"

(Continued from page 129) animal slumber of Courbet's sleeping females: his vulgar *Demoiselles aux Bords de la Seine,* for example, or his notorious painting of lesbian nudes—entitled *Sleep.* No: Repose, the domain of the Aesthetic Woman, is distinctly different, and implies a kind of pensive self-absorption, a dreamy but highly self-conscious interiorization of sensibility rather than an abandonment of it altogether.

How do our artists attain to a condition of repose in their paintings? First of all, by insisting on the horizontality of their compositions. It is interesting to compare, as Carter Ratcliff has in his monograph on Sargent, Edouard Manet's portrait of his friend, later sister-in-law, and fellow-artist, Berthe Morisot, half ironically, one supposes, entitled *Repose,* with Sargent's later version of the theme. I say "half ironically" because, despite the identifying presence of a white dress and the *désinvolture* of Berthe Morisot's pose, the image is an intense one, willfully awkward, disturbing rather than reposeful in its effect—and decisively vertical in its format and compositional emphasis. Sargent's painting, on the contrary, calm, relaxed, and harmonious as its title implies, might equally well be called, taking a page from Whistler, *Symphony in the Horizontal,* for everything tends toward this most soothing of directions. His niece, Rose-Marie Ormond's, dark, reclining head scarcely interrupts the continuous horizontal created by the sofa and the table to her left, a horizontality reinforced by the absolute continuity of the gigantic picture frame echoing the top border of the painting and reiterated in a more blurred, staccato form by the drawers of the little box to the left of the composition. Of course, there would be nothing aesthetically satisfying about a composition based on nothing but harsh, uninterrupted horizontals—*pace* Mondrian!—and Sargent, that most ingratiating of artists, counters this dominating direction with gentle curves and luscious brushwork: The elliptically adumbrated scrolls and swags of frame and table are brought to fruition in the bold, simplified, flat decorative pattern of the young model's elegantly deployed shawl, painted with all Sargent's customary brio, as is the richly modulated greenish white of her skirt. In the *Mosquito Net,* a more informal and unfinished work of 1900, horizontality as a conscious compositional strategy is less stressed, color is reduced to graphic black-and-white, and both treatment and mood are more informal, even playful. The little figure propped so deliciously on an overwhelming, positively Alpine range of white cushions, her head and neck darkly encaged by what the artist himself had wittily dubbed a *"garde manger"* (his sister Emily's invention for keeping out mosquitos), is Polly Barnard, one of the two daughters of Frederick Barnard, the illustrator, who, as a child, had already figured in Sargent's masterpiece of 1885–86, *Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose.*

Neither of Sargent's paintings, however, is as consciously aesthetic—or as sexy—as John Alexander's *Repose.* Here, the defining horizontality associated with the theme of repose is interpreted in large, simplified swingy curves, the catenary of artistic drapery swag, the bulge of the rose-colored cushion, the ripples of the white skirt-hem serving as metaphors of the more enticing rotundities of the young woman's lovely body, cast—shades of Boucher's Rococo pin-up, Victorine O'Murphy!—bottoms-up across the couch. The tantalizing swoosh of the model's extended belly and thigh are cleverly and oh-so-artistically suggested by the sketchy stroke of black paint that whips around her body like a friendly snake—or an Art Nouveau whiplash curve. Her look is languid, just a few steps away from come-hither.

There is something more than a little erotic, then, about these images of reposing women. Their enclosed intimacy, their flower-like passivity recall the hothouse visions of earlier Orientalist paintings—Delacroix's *Women of Algiers,* Ingres's *Odalisques*—Westernized, updated and naturalized, but harem creatures nevertheless. In the enforced, perpetual leisure suggested by the harem captive, the white of repose shades into the more ominous Stygian darkness of Baudelaire's *ennui.* At the same time, one must be aware that whiteness itself has overtones of the erotic: It is not merely a signifier of the aesthetic or the pure but, in the more mundane form of lingerie, froufrou, and nightgowns, brings to mind the boudoir and its intimacies. When the English Pre-Raphaelite, Holman Hunt, in the 1850s wanted to mark the heroine of his *Awakening Conscience* as a "Fallen Woman," he paired her with a clothed male figure and dressed her in a lacy white nightgown, and the implication of sinfulness were immediately apparent to his audience.

Yet perhaps, most of all, these images take us back to the 18th-century masters of the Rococo and their values. Aristocratic, decorative, dedicated to the preservation of the status quo, they are images of unruffled harmony, refinement, and untroubled leisure. In this sense, they truly belong to a vanished past rather than the unsettling present. □

Linda Nochlin teaches art history at City University Graduate Center, New York, and is the author of Realism, Gustave Courbet, *and* Women Artists 1550–1950.


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A MODERN MASTER'S AUTUMNAL TRIUMPHS



Georges Braque: The Late Paintings, 1940–1963. *Organized by The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C. Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Apr. 14–June 14; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, July 7–Sept. 14.*

Many great painters, especially in their old age, have found the world of art sufficient unto itself. No need for travel to foreign lands, no desire to join a glittering social scene—the life of the studio is all that is required, both exotic and familiar, solitary and yet filled with the welcome company offered by line, color, form. In one sense, this is the period of Georges Braque's career that seems best suited to his creative temperament. He spent his youth scaling the heights of modernism with his fellow "mountaineer" Picasso. Together from 1909 through 1913, they invented the pictorial language now called Cubism. But the quiet calm of Braque's Normandy atelier where he spent the summer of his last three decades appears more at one with his nature than the creative ferment of Montmartre. As critic Hilton Kramer has written, Cubism was an approach to painting "that proved to be more radical than . . . [Braque's] own personality."

So the Phillips Collection's decision to focus an exhibition on Braque's late work is most appropriate. In this handsome collection of paintings, the artist's true sensibility is revealed. What remains, after his youthful radicalism has been discarded, is a serious though loving painter of ordinary objects. Flowers and plants, fruit, fish, bread, wine bottles, crockery, simple things found in a Frenchman's home are the starting point for Braque's still-life paintings. But if these items suggest vivid and cheerful Matisse-like images, that impression is wrong. Rather than the sunny sensuality of painters working in Provence, Braque's art has the earnest sobriety of his Norman neighbors. His palette is made up of deeper hues, with a preference for earth tones. There is more flamboyance displayed in Braque's handling of texture than in his color choices. The use of a palette knife is often in evidence, making the sky in his surprisingly conventional landscapes, for example, as heavy as the earth below. The surface is sometimes enlivened by trompe l'oeil devices like faux tortoise shell or marble. The son of a house painter and in his youth apprentice to a decorator, Braque never lost his respect for and love of virtuoso technique.

The residue of Braque's Cubist experiment can be seen in his compositions. Objects are placed in the center of the foreground and their shapes have been reorganized to emphasize volumetric qualities. In the famous pool table series, Braque upends the surface of the table so that the entire playing field is visible, and then uses the pool cues as dynamic lines of force, dissecting the picture at a variety of angles. This approach to the structure of the painting is successful in conveying the energy and excitement of the game, but as a mode of visual analysis it is decidedly old-fashioned. But this restructuring of reality seems to owe more to Cézanne than to the more daring spatial variations of the Picasso years. Braque's late paintings do not challenge. They are works of assurance and contentment, born of meditation in the studio and of the peace, the perspective, and the mastery that the fortunate find in old age. □ *Mary Ann Tighe*

BILL BRANDT'S PENETRATING FOCUS

International Center of Photography, New York, April 8–May 8.



Brandt's *Nude, February 1956*

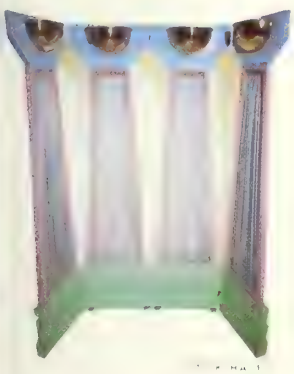
Among this century's photographers of lasting importance, Bill Brandt is one whose quiet voice is likely to be heard after it's all over but the shouting. Now almost 80 and still working, he was influenced in his early career by the Surrealists (he studied with Man Ray) but for the most part has kept to a rigorously independent course. Running counter to postwar trends toward social realism and, more recently, to the "subjectless" photograph, he is also an opponent of technical perfection; but he likewise has never shunned "artificial" aids to create a more powerful image. His characteristically high-contrast prints are a hallmark of an extraordinary artist who stands out in his time in no less striking contrast. □ *Martin Filler*

HE SCREEN AS ART: OOD IDEA GONE WRONG

he Rizzoli Gallery in New ork recently asked four chitects and one artist to sign decorative screens ow on display through pril 11 at the Rizzoli allery in Chicago. It was a







op to bottom: Screens by ichard Haas, Michael Graves, nd Stanley Tigerman.

worthwhile exercise, but as sometimes happens with specially commissioned efforts of this sort (as opposed to spontaneously created works that are later exhibited together), the results were rather disappointing. Architect Thomas Beeby's entry was a bizarre convertible table/chair/screen in a flamboyant style that might be termed Neo-Tolkien. Architect Stanley Tigerman came up with a screen in the form of cartoonlike stylized Classical columns incongruously incorporating electrified sconces. Architect Robert Stern produced a vapid green composition said to represent a partially open French balcony window. More successful was Michael Graves's Classical screen draped with his own Sunar fabric. Best of show: painter Richard Haas's sharp but affectionate take-off on Art Deco. This vibrantly zig-zagged lacquer screen, strong in presence and coherent in line, was ironically, as its creator correctly boasted, "the most architectural" of them all. □ *M.F.*





WIDE-ANGLE LOOK AT A PHOTOGRAPHER OF FASHION

Norman Parkinson, the photographer most famous for his gauzy portraits of British royals, has a much broader range, shown in this 1975 double take of model Jerry Hall in Russia. His best work is assembled in *Fifty Years of Style and Fashion* by Norman Parkinson (Vendome, $30), including a hilarious photo of novelist Barbara Cartland posed more regally than the Queen.



Art Deco towers, N.Y.C., 1966

THE ARCHITECTURAL EYE OF CERVIN ROBINSON

Farish Gallery, Rice University, Houston, through April 17; Wellesley College Art Gallery, Wellesley, Massachusetts, Fall 1983.

There are but a handful of architectural photographers whose pictures are as much works of art as the objects they represent. Among contemporary practitioners of the art, none is more distinguished than Cervin Robinson, whose photographs of the past 25 years are now the subject of a retrospective exhibition that brings together 100 of his black-and-white images and 15 color works. They demonstrate Robinson's remarkable ability to create photographs that are themselves the embodiment of Vitruvius' famous triad of architectural values: firmness, commodity, and delight. Robinson's photographs typically are composed with an architectonic solidity (*Continued on page 176*)



British Art Center, Yale University, New Haven, 1978

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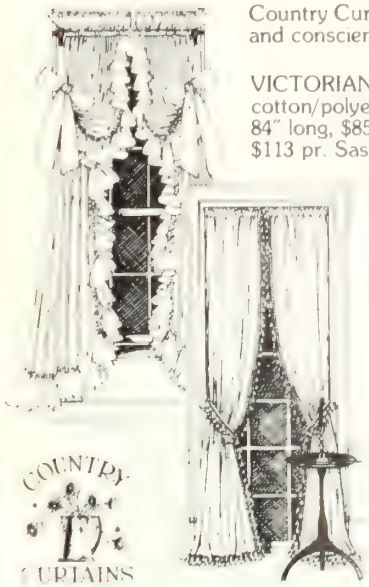
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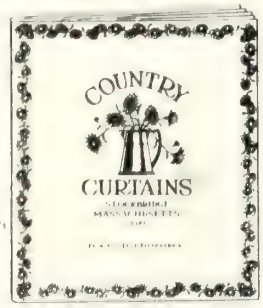
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(Continued from page 175)
that resists cropping. Unlike pictures by other photographers, his will rarely work if tampered with, preserving the integrity of his vision to an uncanny degree. Significantly, Robinson never attempts to make a building look better than it is, yet he can somehow take a very handsome photograph of a less-than-handsome structure, and have those two qualities remain absolutely separable. His understated but piercing wit often flashes out, such as in his 1978 photograph of a pair of Regency marble busts on pedestals ludicrously flanking a fire door at Louis Kahn's British Art Center at Yale. With one flick of his shutter he wryly deflates the hollow grandiloquence of that building.

But he is perhaps best known for his photographs of tall buildings: His most famous is a 1966 view of New York's Chrysler Building flanked by the General Electric Building and a tower of the Waldorf-Astoria. Taken from a vantage point since obscured by new construction, this unforgettable image has come to symbolize the glamour of New York's Art Deco architecture. It and a number of his other unsurpassed photos of that period are collected in *Skyscraper Style: Art Deco New York* (Oxford, $18.95). An exceptionally patient artist, Robinson has been known to wait weeks for the perfect light in which to take a picture. By the evidence at hand in this fine exhibition, it would seem that his persistence has been well worth the wait. □ *M.F.*

THE FINNISH NATIONAL OPERA COMES TO THE MET

The last time the Met played host to an entire foreign opera company was in 1976, when the Paris Opera held forth under the aegis of the late Sol Hurok. Now, seven years later, the Finnish National Opera, in its first visit to the United States, will appear at the Met to perform two contemporary Finnish operas, Joonas Kokkonen's *The Last Temptations* and Aulis Sallinen's *The Red Line,* in addition to a concert of music by Sibelius (April 26–30).

"For these operas to be shown optimally for their first appearance in the United States, nobody can do it better than the Finns themselves," says Jane Hermann, director of presentations for the Met and a central figure in the realization of an event that has involved the cooperative efforts of the Consulate General of Finland in New York, the Ministry of Education in Finland, and the administrations of both opera companies.

"These operas are emotional both in story and in music,"



Talvela in *The Last Temptations*

Hermann continues. "They are not antiseptic. They are nationalistic. They have to do with the downtrodden, survival in the harsh Finnish weather; and it is the human element that makes these operas so moving."

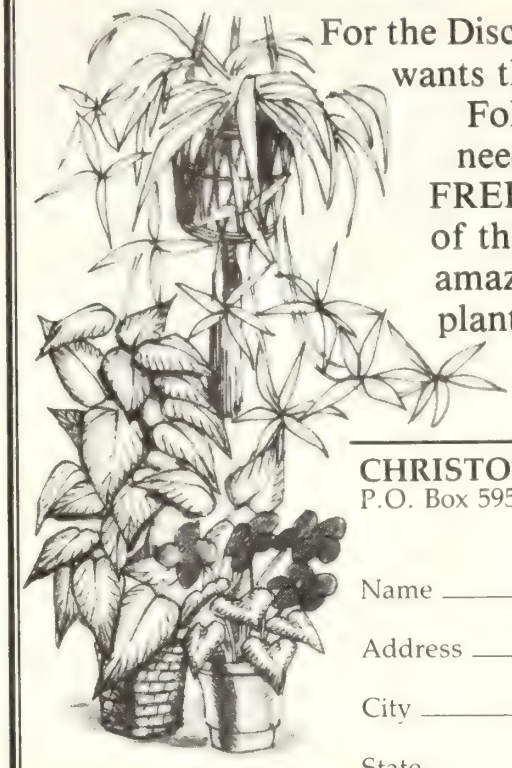
Although their music is infrequently heard in the United States, both Kokkonen and Sallinen have achieved stature in Europe as symphonists. The orchestra is used masterfully in the operas and powerfully applied toward heightening dramatic focal points and supporting characteristically lyrical vocal lines.

Both operas have received an enormous number of performances in Finland. Frequency of performance is the operatic way of life there. "Opera in general is very popular in Finland," says Sallinen. "But you know, it is very difficult for modern opera today. If London gives a premiere of a new opera, it is for five or six times and then it runs out. In Finland operas are kept in the repertoire a long time."

Creative directorship under the able hands of Juhani Raiskinen underlies the superb ensemble work and the high quality of dramatic presentation that

(Continued on page 178)

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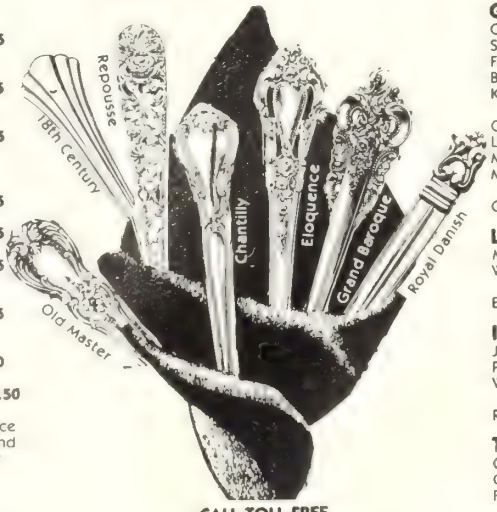
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JOURNAL

(Continued from page 177)
characterizes performances by the Finnish National Opera. According to Raiskinen, "It is our ensemble work that is of a very high standard internationally. As in football it doesn't matter who scores. The ball is passed from one to another and patterns are woven." Yet there will be no dearth of soloists of international stature. The most well-known, particularly for his Met performances of *Boris Godunov,* is the Finnish bass Martti Talvela, who will sing the lead in *The Last Temptations* on opening night.

Finland is a small country, and the 500-seat Finnish National Opera house is modest in comparison to the 4,000-person capacity of the Met. The mere size of the Met's house and stage is one of the problems that the singers and set designers must negotiate. But as Jane Hermann observes, "The most interesting aspect of this move is that the administrations of the Met and the Finnish National Opera, the performers, and the composers as well are not intimidated by this change." Perhaps it's just a question of Finnish grit; the Finns call it *sisu.* □ *Harold F. Lewin*

THORN BIRDS ROOSTS ON TV

After much anticipation, Colleen McCullough's *The Thorn Birds* has come to the small screen. The story begins in 1915, introducing Rachel Ward as Meggie Cleary, a young girl arriving at Drogheda, a sheep ranch in New South Wales. She grows up under the watchful and adoring eye of the handsome and ambitious priest Ralph de Bricassart (Richard Chamberlain). When Meggie reaches adulthood their mutual passion becomes more complicated; the saga, which ends in 1962, shows how their lives and many others' are affected by this bond. The plot is wonderful escapist material—every character has some sort of juicy love-related problem, and no one ever suffers from a career dilemma.

Though few would consider *The Thorn Birds* a literary or visual masterpiece, this nine-hour production is engrossing and quite nicely done. On ABC, in four parts, beginning March 27. □ *Gabrielle Winkel*

(Continued from page 92) Let it be id to the neophyte loft-dweller that a ·obable—and probably drastic—ıange in lifestyle is needed to survive. ıd a sense of humor. These antiquat- l commercial buildings, encrusted ıth sometimes fabulous architectural :tailing, were never intended to ac- ımmodate people at night: boilers, el- ·ators, hot-water heaters—usually as d as the building—break down with gularity. One must proceed with res- nation. Disaster can strike at a mo- ent's notice. The commercial ıilding that has been co-opted is a *ung* co-op, often unable to absorb e last-ditch replacement cost of a ›0,000 boiler. So either the mainte- ınce goes up, or the expense is spread nongst the shareholders in the form an assessment proportionate to the uare footage owned; this happens a t and is unpopular. In the meantime, e intrepid homeowner, challenged 20-degree January weather that is ›lder inside than out, hooks up his/ ·r energy-saving heaters, hastily ac- ıired at Macy's and lugged home on the subway at great risk to life and limb, only to find an uncooperative fuse box or circuit breaker. Try heating that beloved, romantic, cavernous space with its 14-foot ceilings. Since not many friends will be prepared to receive you on such short notice, and for what could be an extended stay, it is probably best to check immediately into a hotel.

Hiring the finest structural engineer in the city to council you on your imminent investment can be a waste of time. The machinery, he will tell you, might collapse tomorrow or last forever. The same is often sadly true of ornamental details on the exterior. One of the most salient features of my building, the beautiful, carved stone scallops ringing its roof, are soon to bite the dust because, left to the elements, they very well might tumble down and clobber someone on the pavement 13 stories below. Unfortunately it's too expensive to bring them up to code. Another noteworthy fact about my building is that it's been known to *rain* all over the sidewalk for days at a time. This is a phenomenon caused by a mysterious leak in the water tower on the roof. Experts have never been able to locate the leak; we occupants shrug our shoulders and carry umbrellas.

Despite the sense I sometimes have of camping out, despite the curses when the elevator fails and we take to the fire-exit stairs, despite my elaborate alarm system—which the maid has never figured out—and Fichet keys that weigh down the pocket, I perversely refuse to be disenchanted. I pretend hardship is good for my character. I truly do love the sense of anonymity the area gives me, the bizarre luxury when everything is working, the certain knowledge that lurking around the next bend is some kind of adventure. One must be philosophical enough to bear in mind that if all else fails, the restaurant Joanna is just around the corner, open till 1 A.M. every day—and the gravlax and chocolate truffles are always great. □

Brooke Hayward is the author of Haywire.

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(Continued from page 98) tourists scatter in their wake. But first some better accommodations for them would be needed. That was their reasoning when the Chinese first invited Pei and several other foreigners to discuss the problem.

Pei's duality, China-born and America-matured, must have given him an edge in these proceedings. Over endless cups of tea and polite talk—the Chinese way of doing business—he agreed with them as they decried the brutal monotony of the buildings the Russians had left behind when they were eased out of China.

The Chinese indicated they were considering American-style high-rises, "the kind they have in Hong Kong." Pei shuddered and went on with what was becoming an educational-diplomatic encounter worthy of the skill of a Talleyrand.

Wouldn't it be better, he suggested a meeting later, to leave Beijing's skyline intact and build nothing that would dwarf the architectural treasures of which China is so proud—the Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven, the pagodas and museums?

Such a bow to traditionalism—revolutionists though they are—met with unanimous approval and in a moment they believed they had thought of it themselves. A nice example of Pei's wiles. And as a matter of fact he has sometimes used the same conversational technique, with equal success, on such faraway city fathers as those of Dallas and Minneapolis and other places where he has left his imprint on the landscape.

How he persuaded the new Mandarins of Beijing to place his hotel so far from the capital remains a mystery and probably will stay that way. The attractions of the site, however, are apparent. Hiking trails thread the forested hills and lead to scenic lookouts and an occasional ancient temple or pagoda. Some crumbling walls and even traces of an antique hotel were discovered near a highway.

Pei immediately asked for an arboreal survey of that old hotel site. Every tree of any importance was mapped and, as things turned out, two giant ginkgo trees many centuries old dictated the hotel's final placement on an axis midway between them.

But before this happened, four or five other competitors for this juicy commission had dropped out or been eliminated. Some of their cost estimates and other demands shocked the Chinese. Finally Pei alone was under consideration and Chinese officials asked him how they could raise foreign capital for the project. By his own account he replied: "You want it to be Chinese: Why not build it with your own money?" Such a thought had never occurred to them. But that's what they did.



A room in the Fragrant Hill Hotel

Throughout the design process, never an easy time for architects with indecisive clients, Chinese officials kept reiterating the theme of Chineseness. They need not have worried because the thought, in a more sophisticated, less nationalistic way, was shaping Pei's approach to the design.

"If you start by finding out how people really live, you will eventually find the proper vernacular for filling their needs," he has said. "They desperately need new buildings and are right in being dissatisfied with most everything built in the last 50 years. They look longingly at Western buildings but don't exactly want them in their own country—too foreign. They, of course, don't know what they want."

What he has given them is an airy pavilion, serene and comfortable—and quite romantic.

And in combining new and old, he has managed to avoid pastiche and still to recall some of his own architectural innovations and finally to incorporate enough Chinese-ness to satisfy any reasonable cultural nationalist. A big order, but Pei has brought it off, I think.

The entrance gate alone announces that this is, indeed, China. The gate's flared pediment could be nowhere else. Nor could the five scarlet flags floating proudly above. Within high protective walls an intricately paved courtyard gives onto a modest entry way that in turn yields glimpses through glass doors all the way through the hotel to a distant garden and the giant ginkgo trees. The visitor's direct progress is blocked by a moongate that deflects lobby traffic down either side.

The lobby soars four stories to a steel-and-glass roof, the beams exposed and reminiscent instantly of Pei's East Building of the National Gallery in Washington. All day long the lobby is awash with sunlight and shifting shadow patterns. Around three sides latticed galleries rise to serve as corridors to the guest quarters. In one inspired stroke Pei has abolished the cold ugliness of hotel corridors and pierced the gallery lattice with flirtatious window openings overlooking the lobby. The bedrooms, compact but not crowded, all have outside views and bathrooms paved and fixtured with elegant simplicity, an off-beige color scheme running throughout the guest area.

Beyond the lobby several smaller public rooms lead directly to a broad terrace and thence to one of Pei's most spectacular accomplishments, the garden. More than a bow to the demands of his clients, his garden is related so closely to the hotel neither could exist without the other. The winding cobbled paths, the wide pool, the waterfall, the pines, and above all the carefully chosen rocks express his own reverence for China and what he considers a *(Continued on page 182)*

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(Continued from page 180) Chinese garden should be.

Not imitative of the old gardens—his is more relaxed, more generous with space—nor as rigorously symbolic as are most Chinese gardens, his garden invites visitors to come in groups to experience its pleasures. That alone is a major departure from Chinese traditions that produced densely packed gardens designed for the solitary visitor, the scholar-poet, the philosopher, or even the very rich merchant. Gardens were meant for silent contemplation.

"I want to remind the Chinese of the intimate connection between gardens and architecture that they used to understand so well," he said one day as we strolled along a pebbled path. "When everything is finished there will be six more gardens, smaller ones, related to different parts of the hotel, some very small."

"When you place a building in such a glorious natural setting as the Fragrant Hills you can do something you can't do other places. You can 'borrow the view.' I mean place things so the view becomes part of the architectural scene.

"Then the view jumps over the wall."

Pei's garden is flanked by two wings of unequal size and shape, their exterior complete but the interior unfinished. If all goes well the two wings will be habitable in a few months and so will another handsome feature of the compound—a swimming pool that extends from inside to outside so the heated waters can be enjoyed in all seasons.

As far as the commercial prospects go, Pei's building is not really "in the middle of nowhere," as some urban doubters claimed. From Beijing it is in the direction of several prime tourist attractions. Close by is the Summer Palace, a complex of temples, lakes, and Imperial living quarters that daily attract thousands of tourists, both foreign and Chinese. The famous Ming Tombs are scattered across a broad valley not far away while an hour further to the northwest lies China's premier tourist attraction, the Great Wall.

The region is soaked in historic associations. The hotel occupies a corner of a national park, Jinyiyuan, meaning Park of Tranquility and Rest, site of a palace built in 1186. All of it, like so many choice sites in China, was once an Imperial garden. Which led one of Pei's friends to observe that he had accomplished the ultimate, in Chinese eyes, by creating "a garden within a garden."

Pei is proudest of two treasures he unearthed, treasures that eventually enhanced his hotel. They sound mundane—some old tiles and some curiously shaped rocks—but each plays a significant role in their new hotel setting.

He had been questioning numerous Chinese builders about certain soft-colored tiles he wanted to use as a major building material. All shook their heads. No chance. No longer in use, not even manufactured, they agreed. Then while scraping about in the tangled overgrown site he uncovered a pile of ancient tiles exactly the color he was seeking, a warm darkish gray, Quaker gray to Western eyes. Triumphantly he dug them out and by sheer coincidence found a workman who said he knew the secret of making them. He was telling the truth and now an ancient craft has been revived. Thousands were used in the hotel and the old tile-maker's business flourishes.

The rocks were found in a different manner. Pei wanted to stick to Chinese tradition by making rocks the central element of his garden. But he was troubled by the eccentric, convoluted shapes that Chinese generally use, especially in contemporary landscaping schemes, shapes that suggest chaos more than repose. While leafing through some tourist brochures, he suddenly let out a shout: "That's what I want!" One brochure illustrated a desolate mountain in the Yunnan Stone Forest in remote southwest China. There they were, acre after acre of thrusting rocks, simpler in shape but very massive and suggestive of great power and antiquity. They, too, were Quaker gray.

Bureaucrats were stunned by his request for those immense, faraway rocks but finally said okay. After all, the rocks were as Chinese as any thing you could get. A dozen flatcar brought them thousands of mile across China to the wonderment o peasants watching along the way. No they stand, deep-dug and carefull matched as the centerpiece of Pei garden, which in turn is the cente piece of the whole hotel complex.

Not all his adventures were as hap py.

Construction delays sometime seemed endless and mindless. Deliver of supplies was erratic. So were th work habits of laborers and artisan Trained workmen with shorter te breaks, more hustle, and more fine tuned skills were in short supply, no surprising in a nation that is over whelmingly agricultural and has stud ously turned its back to industr alization for centuries.

Describing some of his experience Pei said, "At one point I got desperat I abandoned the polite ceremonial ap proach of my ancestors. Suddenly found myself shouting and poundin the table like any good American bus nessman who thinks he's being il treated by foreigners. The Chines bureaucrats were aghast. But sudden I got what I wanted. I guess I'm not a completely Chinese as I thought." □

William Walton, a painter and write was chairman of the U.S. Commissio of Fine Arts in the Kennedy Admini tration. As a war correspondent t World War II he wrote for Time *an* Life *and later was on the staff of* Th New Republic. *His friendship wit I.M. Pei began almost 20 years ag when Pei was commissioned to desig the Kennedy Library in Boston.*

Building facts

ARCHITECTS: *I M Pei & Partners* I. M. Pe Fred K. H. Fang *(Architect Representative Beijing),* A. Preston Moore, K. Wong, C. Pei, David Martin, Calvin Tsao, Karen va Lengen, Tracy Turner, Wang Tian-xi. INTER OR DESIGN: *Dale Keller & Associates.* Da Keller, Patricia Keller, John Morford. STRU TURAL ENGINEERING: *Beijing Design Colleg* Ma Ming-yi. MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICA ENGINEERING: *J. Roger Preston & Partner* Patrick Kroos. LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS: *Be ing Garden Department.* Tan Xin.

Continued from page 105) then she ves me my goodbye kiss and says off-andedly, "Tomatoes in damp soil nd more to get fungi," and toddles way to her plane. But by October othing in the garden matters, so sure n I that I will never plant it again.

The psychology of gardening, obvi-isly, is quite complicated. In my ex-erience far more educated city people ho move to the country bother with ardens than do people born in the ountry. The latter take immense plea-ire in being well enough off *not* to ave to work that hard to eat lettuce. ity people feel they have to work off eir sins, perhaps, or are convinced ey are being poisoned by sprays on eir vegetables. Country people, be-g generally more conservatively busi-ess-oriented, spray everything in ght, perhaps to show their faith in emical companies.

I garden, I suppose, because I must. would be intolerable to have to pass unplanted fenced garden a few mes a day. But if it makes little eco-nomic sense to plant it, and a very de-batable taste advantage, there are certain compensations and these must be what annually tilt my mind toward all that work. There are few sights quite as gratifyingly beautiful as a vegetable garden glistening in the sun, all dewy and glittering with a dozen shades of green at seven in the morning. Far love-lier, in fact, than rows of hot dogs. In some pocket of the mind there may even be a tendency to metamorphose this vision into a personal reassurance that all this healthy growth, this order-liness and thrusting life must somehow reflect similar movements in one's own spirit. Without a garden to till and plant I would not know what April was for.

As it is, April is for getting irritated all over again at this pointless, time-consuming hobby. I do not understand people who claim to "love" gardening. A garden is an extension of oneself—or selves, and so it has to be an arena where striving does not cease, but con-tinues by other means. As an example: You simply have to face the moment when you must admit that the lettuce was planted too deep or was not wa-tered enough, and *cease hoping* it will show itself tomorrow, and *dig up the row again.* But you will feel better for not standing on your dignity. And that's what gardening is all about—character building. Which is why Adam was a gardener. (And we all know where it got him, too.)

But is it conceivable that the father of us all should have been a mason, weaver, shoemaker, or anything but a gardener? Of course not. Only the gar-dener is capable of endlessly reviving so much hope that this year, regardless of drought, flood, typhoon, or his own stupidity, this year he is going to do it *right!* Leave it to God to have picked the proper occupation for His only creature capable of such perpetual and unregenerate self-delusion.

I suppose it should be added, for honesty's sake, that the above was writ-ten on one of the coldest days in De-cember. □



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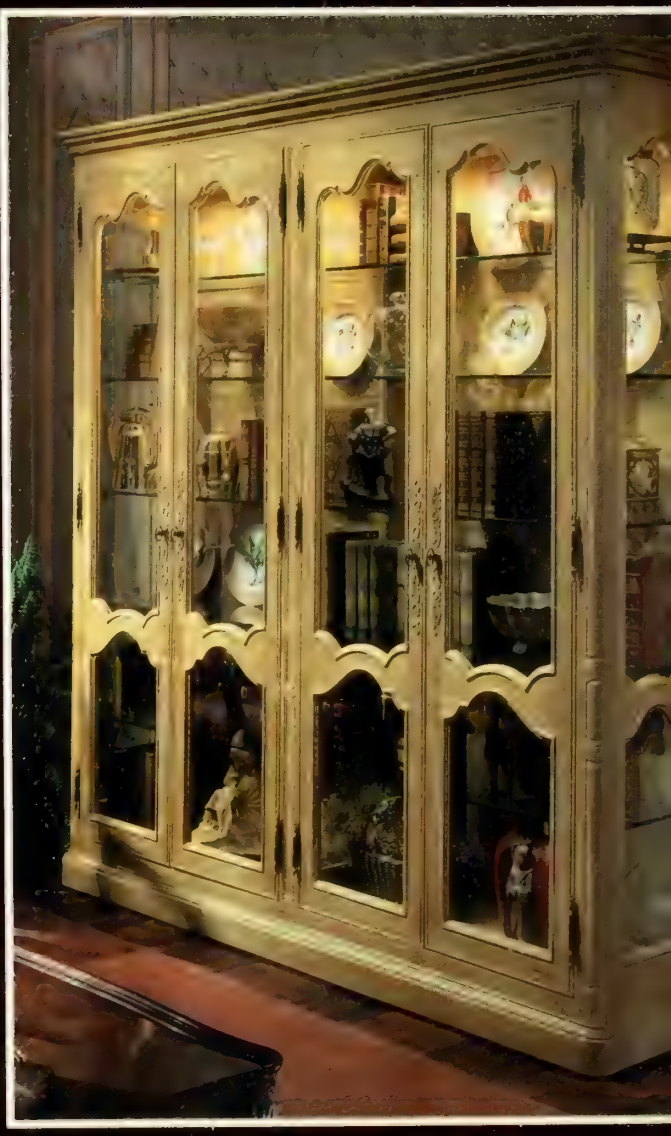
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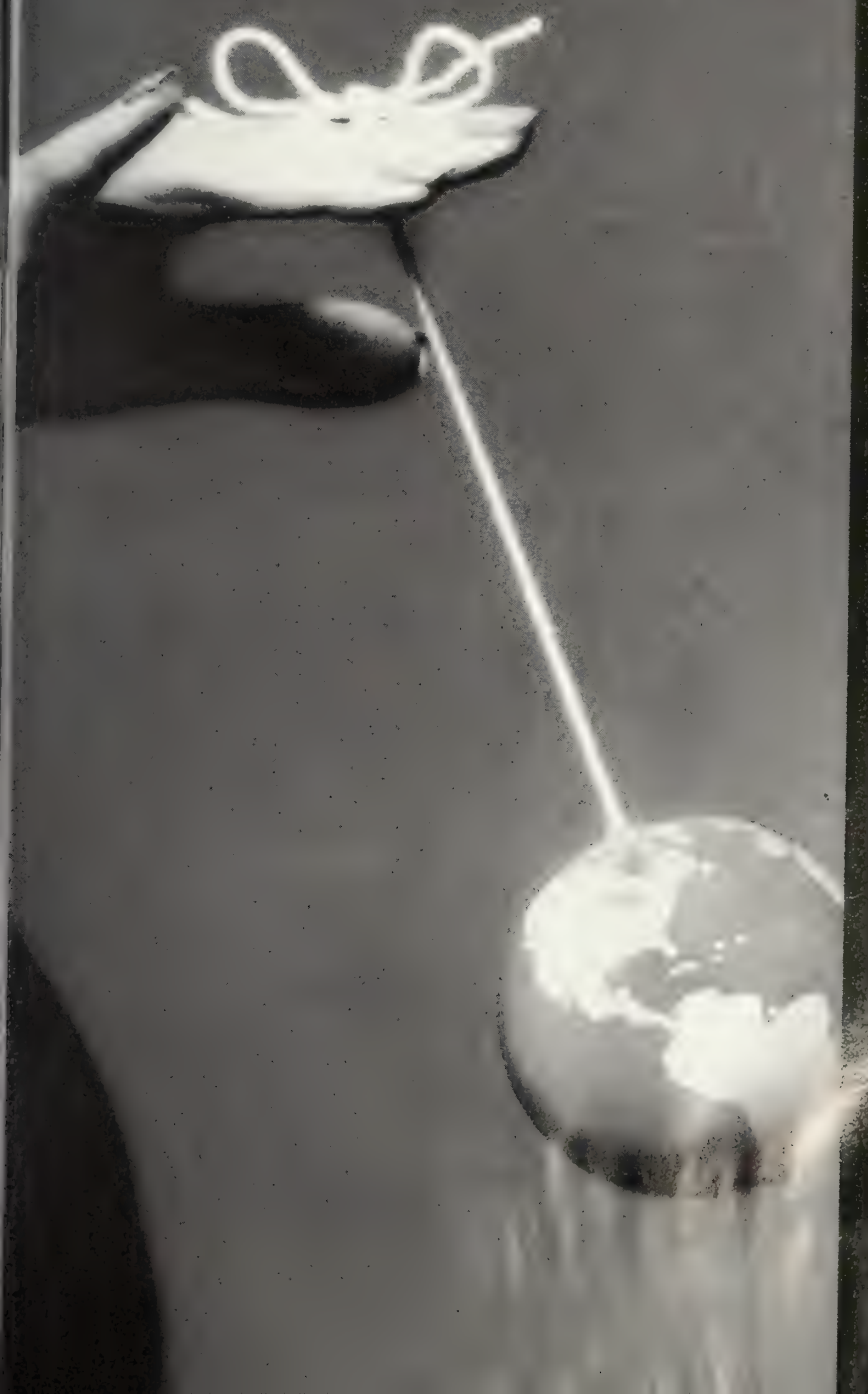
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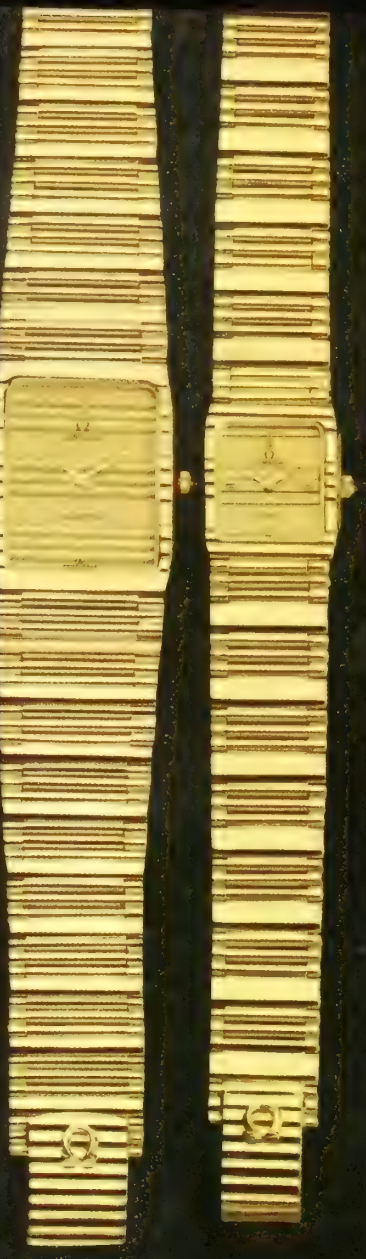
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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF "MR. TASTE"

William Odom was a major force behind Parsons School and McMillen Inc.

By John Richardson

While the modern movement has been chronicled in meticulous detail, the development of high-style decoration has been ignored by historians—dismissed for the most part as pastiche or chichi. Until recently, that is. Now, it seems, a reaction has set in against Bauhaus tyranny, and students of the period are taking another look at more decorated interiors of the recent past and discovering that white-gloved pioneers like Elsie de Wolfe and Syrie Maugham, Ruby Ross Wood and Eleanor Brown deserve recognition for imposing their smart taste on rich clients and, via magazines, on middle America. For all their modishness, these ladies and their bevy of mostly male followers did as much, if not more, to enhance their clients' lives than the purveyors of the bleak, white containers ordained by American modernism, puritanism, and practicality.

True, a lot of chic decorating in the '20s and '30s was trivial or vulgar or camp—hence its perverse popularity today—but the best examples were incomparably elegant, as befitted tastemakers of the period like Millicent Rogers or Lily Havermeyer. And if much of this fancy decoration was stylish and architecturally grammatical, this was largely due to an *arbiter elegantium*—teacher, connoisseur, gentleman dealer—the never very celebrated and now almost forgotten William Odom. Odom's prestige stemmed primarily from his courses in interior design in the early days of the Parsons School and the fact that he was director for many years of the Parsons "finishing school" in Paris. However, because he was also the *éminence grise* behind McMillen Inc., when it was the largest and most fashionable decorating business in America, his influence spread far beyond the confines of Parsons. Indeed Odom can be said to have created the high-style vernacular—a pared down, up-to-date version of Neoclassicism—that is still, 60 years after it all began, in fashion. You know the look: mirrored walls hung with more mirrors and decorative paintings; needlework rugs set off by white carpeting; and Empire chimney-pieces garnished with cachepots, obelisks, or tole urns.



A portrait of Odom from the early '20s

According to House & Garden of 1946, "there is hardly a decorator practicing today but at some time, directly or indirectly, fell under the spell of William Odom." One need only cite his disciple Van Day Truex, who followed Odom as head of Parsons, first in Paris, then New York, and subsequently headed Tiffany's design department; or Eleanor Brown, who created McMillen Inc. A conspicuous absentee from the Odom alumni is Billy Baldwin. This is the more surprising since this designer's elegant, understated work seldom deviated from the canons of Odom's taste. But then Baldwin did not attend Parsons, and, despite many shared interests and friends, the two men never saw much of one another because, as Baldwin says, "I worked exclusively with Ruby Ross Wood and Odom worked exclusively with Eleanor Brown, who was Ruby's greatest rival. However, I had the greatest respect for Odom's sense of style. I was also amazed by his elegance and will never forget him and his valet arriving for a weekend *(Continued on page 10)*

clarence house

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(Continued from page 8) with two Rolls-Royces."

Since Odom spent his life hiding behind a mask of urbane reclusiveness, he was something of a mystery to his contemporaries—all the more so 40 years after his death. According to his nephew, he was "reserved, seemingly disdainful; his nostrils flared as though offended by distasteful odors. He was much admired by grand ladies, such as Harriet (Sumner) Welles and Julia Welldon, who pursued him in vain." A native of Columbus, Georgia, William Odom was born in 1886 to an impoverished Southern gentleman of a father—a speculator on the cotton market who had a side line in trotters—and a charming Italian woman who was kept dark because her father had started life as a Genovese cobbler. Odom would doubtless have followed his two brothers onto the race track, where both made names as jockeys and trainers, had he not suffered an appalling riding accident as a child. Five years of convalescence decided him on a musical career and, around 1904, he came to New York to study conducting. According to Stokowski, he lacked the necessary stamina, so Odom enrolled at the New York School of Fine and Applied Arts—soon to change its name to the Parsons School in honor of its enterprising director.

From the start Frank Alvah Parsons realized the potential of this fragile but fiercely ambitious young student with his flair for scholarship and instinct for the finer points of antique furniture, and groomed him to join the staff, which he did in 1909, a year after graduating. At the same time Odom started work on a project of his own: an ambitious two-volume *History of Italian Furniture* (published 1916; reprinted 1966), which is still the most authoritative work on the subject. However, Europe had always been Odom's goal, and in 1920 he persuaded Parsons to let him move to Paris and set up a branch of the school at 10 place des Vosges, a handsome 17th-century house in the Marais. Here students who had completed the two-year course in New York could spend their third year studying French, and to a lesser extent, Italian decoration. The huge house also provided Odom with quarters in keeping with his *folie de grandeur*. The salon was lined with spectacular Louis XVI *boiseries,* the paneled library with shelves of architectural books (the collection is now at Yale) interspersed with groups of architectural drawings. Colors were rich but muted, furniture and objects (especially opalines) were arranged with fanatical respect for symmetry. Everything was discreetly grand. Gentlemanly. However, due partly to Odom's narcissistic passion for mirrors, the effect was a touch ladylike. "The only trouble with William's taste," a fellow expatriate *(Continued on page 12)*





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(Continued from page 10) once remarked, "was that it was too studied, too glacially good."

For all his dandyism, Odom was a shrewd operator who knew just how his connoisseurship could be made to generate the cash necessary for a lavish *train de vie.* Too shy and fastidious to be in trade, he preferred to deal through others, above all the aforementioned McMillen Inc. In this respect Erica Brown's recent book, *Sixty Years of Interior Design: The World of McMillen,* deserves credit for recognizing the importance of Odom's influence on Eleanor Brown and how her firm's success depended to a very considerable extent on the unending supply of fine quality furniture and objects—late 18th and early 19th century for the most part—that her mentor shipped over from France. For stripping their country of so much in the way of decorative art, the French awarded Odom the Légion d'Honneur in 1938.

As he grew older, Odom tended to keep students, like clients, at one remove from himself. Rather than comment on their work to their faces, he would, if possible, pass on his observations through an instructor. This oblique way of teaching did not, apparently, dismay students. On the contrary, distance seems to have lent enchantment, even charisma, to this chilly man. For Odom was an exemplar to be reckoned with in prewar Paris, not just for his impeccable taste in art or music, but for his no less impeccable taste in friends (the *gratin* rather than café society), suits (Huntsman) and pets (blue-gray Bedlingtons).

Most summers, Odom would rent the Palazzo Barbaro in Venice from his friends, the Curtises: hosts, earlier in the century, to Henry James and John Singer Sargent. And some of his more promising or presentable students would be invited for a crash course in Venetian culture and the ways of the world. England seems to have played little or no role in Odom's pantheon, probably because English 18th-century decoration had come to be identified in America with philistinism and stuffiness, certainly not with high style. Nevertheless, Odom made frequent visits to London and prided himself on close friendships with the Sitwells, Cecil Beaton, and others of that ilk. And on the strength of his reactionary views, he was welcomed by Nancy Astor and her "Cliveden set" of appeasers.

These new friendships may have inspired Odom's ill-fated project—the more surprising in such an ardent Francophile—of leaving Paris and retiring to London. Blind to the imminence of war, he went ahead and in 1939 rented a handsome pilastered house in Chester Terrace (Regent's Park) and decorated it in the height of Neoclassical taste as a setting for his by now remarkable collection of French and Italian furniture. But no sooner had he moved in than war was declared and the house had to be closed. The furniture was repacked and stored at Sacheverell Sitwell's house in Northamptonshire. Just as well: Chester Terrace was bombed to bits. And in 1940 Odom returned to New York with the barest necessities: two hundred suits, some gold boxes, and a new valet.

Back in New York, Odom continued to operate behind the scenes for McMillen. He also did some teaching at the Parsons School, where he was still president, and his brother-in-law, George Rushmore, vice-president. The latter's son—the writer, Robert Rushmore—remembers how his Uncle William used to pay surprise visits on Sunday afternoons, rearrange the furniture, and then drive off in the indispensable Rolls, leaving the family to shove everything back into place.

Odom failed to acclimatize to his native country. He pined for Europe, above all for his recently deceased valet, William Dickman, with whose spirit he communicated via mediums. And Odom's health, always precarious, began to deteriorate. He was only 56, but there seemed to be nothing left to live for. After his death, burial had to be postponed indefinitely, because of the dead man's wish to be laid to rest beside his valet in a London cemetery. Thus the Odom story did not end until after the war, when the mortal remains of "Mr. Taste" (as somebody once dubbed him) and his marooned collection (all except the opaline vases bequeathed to the Musée des Arts Décoratifs) crossed one another in mid-Atlantic. Thirty years ago this month, McMillen Inc. arranged an exhibition and sale of most of Odom's possessions. It was an instant sell-out. □



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ELIZABETH DAVID

The seven books of this influential scholar of cookery have become classics not just for her recipes, but also for her delicious prose

By Elisabeth Lambert Ortiz



When Elizabeth David was a girl of 16 she went off to Paris to study French history and literature at the Sorbonne. She stayed with a French family and it was then that her passionate interest in, and appreciation of, good food was born. On her return to England she taught herself to cook and began the long process of learning about food and everything related to it that has never ceased. Her current work in progress is on ice and its history in the kitchen, and on ice cream. It probably began with a study on ice cream. For her readers, it is easy to see how that would lead her into a study of ice and its use and history, and with what relish she would unearth new facts, exciting information, bizarre and amusing sidelights, to pass on to the rest of us when she is satisfied that she knows as much as she can possibly find out and put on to paper in her elegant, beautifully fashioned prose, which if one knew nothing about, or cared nothing about food, would still be a pleasure to read. She does not call it a forthcoming book, but a work in progress, as she will take just as long to write it as she feels it needs. Her *English Bread and Yeast Cookery*, published in 1977, took five years. It is typical of the intellectual depth of all her work.

Her appearance and behavior both make a mockery of her chronological age, which is 69. She has the figure and face of someone two decades younger. She is a very pretty woman with her clear, delicate features, slender figure and graying brown hair. She is a complicated woman, intensely private but generous in her praise of others, generous with her help and quick to acknowledge those who have helped or inspired her. She is camera-shy, paradoxically, as she was for a while an actress with the Oxford Repertory Company and later at the open-air theater in Regent's Park. In 1965 she opened a cookware shop in London because she knew there was a need for the things she planned to sell. It was the first of its kind in England and widely influential. For Chuck Williams, founder of the Williams-Sonoma cookware shops and catalogues, "her love of French and Italian pottery—she used to go in a van and pick it up from small potters all over France and Italy—has been the greatest inspiration to me. When I first started buying she showed me what each piece is for and just how to use it. She has always been very conscious of quality; she has the highest standards. And it was ever because of her that I started making bread." In 1973 Elizabeth David, unhappy with the policy of her partners, severed all connection with the business.

She has traveled widely and has kept house in France, Italy, Greece, Egypt and India, and wherever she went she learned to cook the local dishes in her own kitchen. Her first work, *A Book of Mediterranean Food*, has been in print since it was published in 1950. It influenced a generation of cooks, telling the still-rationed British of "the lovely cookery of the blessed lands of sun and sea and olive trees," inviting them to bring the *(Continued on page 16)*

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(Continued from page 14) flavors of these rich and colorful dishes into their own kitchens. The extraordinary thing is that they did. Quite ordinary people who had not scrupled to put up with dried eggs and other horrors went looking for olive oil, garlic, herbs like wild marjoram and basil, sweet red, green, and yellow peppers, eggplants, olives, and a host of foods that are commonplace in any British market today but were rare then. It was a sensuous book, brilliantly original, joyously written, very wide-ranging, including dishes from the eastern Mediterranean as well as the more familiar Provençal ones. It was, at the same time, scholarly. It changed the point of view of a whole generation of home cooks, and started British cooking on the road back to excellence. She did more. She inspired writers to research into cuisines not documented in English, and helped persuade publishers that real recipes, not those adapted out of recognition, were what the public wanted. And she inspired young men and women to make cooking their career.

Mediterranean Food was followed in 1951 by *French Country Cooking* and in 1958 by her delightful *Summer Cooking*. In 1960 she produced *French Provincial Cooking*, containing in its introduction the message for cooks in the English-speaking world that good food need not be spectacular, rich, or highly flavored, that the materials could be modest and easily acquired. What is needed is care and regard for the harmony of the finished dish, whether it is the blending of different vegetables in a soup, or the seasoning of the sauce for a chicken. There must be due regard for the quality of the materials, but no extravagance or pretension. It was a message both inspiring and reassuring. Two self-taught British chefs, and there may well be more, have said that they went into their kitchens armed only with Mrs. David's *French Provincial Cooking* and the culinary philosophy they had acquired from reading her. In *The Chez Panisse Menu Cookbook* the brilliant young California chef, Alice Waters, recalls that after a trip to France she knew that "I loved to eat and that I wanted to eat certain foods of a certain quality. I bought Elizabeth David's book, *French Country Cooking*. I cooked everything in it, from beginning to end. I admired her aesthetics of food and wanted a restaurant that had the same feeling as the pictures on the covers of her books. It was so important that I was driven, as if I had a sense of mission."

She goes to the heart of the matter when she says that recipes are not enough, that cooks and housewives must be backed up by the dairy farmers, the pig breeders and pork butchers, the market gardeners and the fruit growers. There is a story that when she wanted tender little zucchini (courgettes in Britain), as she had them in France instead of huge vegetable marrows, she sought out market gardeners and persuaded them to grow and market the vegetable. It is now available year-round, either home-grown or imported. Fresh herbs are increasingly available, and greengrocers who carry pots of basil in the summer say it is because their customers want to make pesto, which they first learned about in Elizabeth David's *Italian Food*, which came out in 1954. It is scholarly like all her work, yet for all its intellectual quality it is full of the poetry she brings to cooking, making it a celebration of life.

Over the last decade a revolution has been taking place in British restaurant food with gifted young chefs springing up all over the country like mushrooms after rain. They are of both sexes, though young men outnumber young women. They are articulate, eager to explain how they feel about cooking and why they cook the way they do, and they shrug off the fact that their profession involves them in punishingly hard work and hours that would make almost anyone quail. One of them said recently that it was reading Elizabeth David when he was a schoolboy that decided him to disappoint his family's ambitions for him as lawyer or doctor, and become a chef. He is only one of many whose first inspiration was Elizabeth David's work. He is interested in English food, and says modestly that his friendship with Mrs. David came about mostly because his restaurant was handy to her house. They have talked at length, and he says she is just as interested in English food and its history as she is in other cuisines. In 1970 she published *Spices, Salt, and Aromatics in the English Kitchen*, an original study that throws a lot of light on English food.

With Alan Davidson and Richard Olney, she was a founding member of Petits Propos Culinaires, a small, non-profit magazine of essays and notes to do with food cookery and cookery books. It is a serious magazine providing a forum for the airing of ideas that could not find another outlet. She is also the honorary president of Prospect books, a publishing house devoted to bringing out facsimile copies of old and important cookbooks, and cookbooks with too limited an appeal to be commercially viable for the average publisher.

A few years ago she was awarded an O.B.E. in recognition of her services to cookery, and it is characteristic of the strength of feeling of her admirers that instead of being pleased, many were annoyed that she had not been awarded the higher honor of being made a Dame. Friends say she can put the fear of God into a greengrocer selling stale or indifferent fruit and vegetables, that she can be sharp when she encounters dishonesty, and quite rude about badly cooked or poor-tasting food, and that she is sometimes lonely because many who admire her put her on a pedestal and place her out of reach, something she dislikes and which offends her since she is genuinely modest and abhors pomposity, and has a keen and lively sense of humor. But she knows she is a prime mover, and she would not discount her authority.

She has been lucky in the sense that she came at the right time, though it is likely that her work would have created its own climate of opinion, and that any time would have been the right time for her. □

Elisabeth Lambert Ortiz is the award-winning writer of a number of cookbooks. Her own work in progress is a book on the young chefs of Britain.



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FIRST IN WAR, FIRST IN PEACE FIRST IN CHINA

George Washington had a passion for fine porcelain: His taste became simpler as his fame grew greater

By Sir John Plumb

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S CHINAWARE By Susan Gray Deitweiler Prologue and epilogue by Christine Meadows. Abrams, $40.



George Washington by Gilbert Stuart

We are so used to invention, to novelty, to the spinning world of fashion that we find it difficult to imagine a time in which the style of furniture, or clothing, or utensils changed so very slowly that it was almost imperceptible. This was never quite true for the aristocracy and the courtiers who circulated about the royal courts of Europe, for they hankered after novelty, but it was true not only of the laboring people—peasants, servants, and craftsmen—but also of country gentry, doctors, lawyers, professionals of all kinds. Were we able to peer into our 17th-century ancestors' houses, rich or poor, we should be amazed by their emptiness—no carpets on the floors; a few chairs set along a wall; occasionally a hard wooden armchair, a few primitive family portraits; mainly walls without pictures, no wallpaper, very few vases if any, little or no glass that was not utilitarian. And for most people, no mirrors. Most furniture was solid, heavy, immensely durable oak, carved, occasionally richly, mainly badly. And, of course, there was no china, no china at all. Before the 18th century Europeans could not make it, try as they might.

A German chemist, Böttger, found kaolin at Meissen near Dresden and started the first china factory under the patronage of Augustus of Saxony. It took Europe by storm. Naturally Böttger and his patron tried desperately to keep the process secret and for many years they succeeded. The success at Meissen had two important effects. The demand for porcelain could not be met by Meissen alone, so larger and larger quantities of Chinese porcelain were imported—some had been in the 17th century—but now imports increased enormously. This china was also frequently designed not only for the European market but for particular customers there—and decorated with their coats of arms. The other effect of Meissen's success was to encourage entrepreneurs everywhere in Europe to try and make china, and to bribe workmen to leave Meissen to help them. They succeeded, particularly with bribes, and by 1750 Europe was studded with china factories—most of them under the patronage of kings and princes. Louis XV of France and his mistress, Madame de Pompadour, were deeply involved in the Royal Factory at Vincennes (afterwards Sèvres).





Left: French Locré chiller, ca. 1785, bought from the Comte de Moustier.
Right: French sugar bowl, Niderviller, ca. 1779–80, presented by the Comte de Custine.

His monogram adorned the wares and indeed, once a year he personally conducted a sale of the china at Versailles. As with most new industries, more factories failed than succeeded. Amongst the china factories in England—Chelsea, Bristol, Plymouth, Derby, Longton Hall, and Bow all failed, only Worcester succeeded. The success of porcelain also stimulated the makers of pottery. This was particularly true of England, and of that great genius, Josiah Wedgwood, who proclaimed that he wanted to become "Vase Maker of



Chinese punch bowl, probably a present to Washington in 1795.

the Universe."

It is hard for us to imagine the excitement that these new luxurious chinawares created, especially amongst those who were entranced by the new world of spending that the 18th century produced, for, along with china there were other excitements—wallpapers, chintzes and textiles, exotic garden plants and new varieties of old ones. All of these new objects and new fashions created a *joie de vivre*—indeed they did more than that, they engendered confidence and a sense of belonging to the future.

Certainly it was a world that fascinated George Washington, and one that attracted (*Continued on page 22*



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(*Continued from page 18*) him very strongly after his marriage in 1759 to Martha Custis, who brought him the wealth that allowed him to emulate, albeit modestly, his neighbors. His expensive tastes, his desire for distinction in clothing as well as domestic furnishings, had been enhanced by his association with his relatives and neighbors, the Fairfaxes, who belonged to the British aristocracy: Indeed male Fairfaxes were educated in England and were accustomed to high fashion in London. And then beyond the Fairfaxes, farther down the Potomac, was Gunston Hall, where George Mason had built and furnished a house of great magnificence that would have passed muster for the country house of a rich merchant of London. Also, of course, there was Williamsburg, where the Governor's Palace glittered with the luxury goods of Britain and, indeed, during Lord Botetourt's term of office it had a splendid display of Chelsea figures.

Fortunately, Washington was a meticulous man who kept exact records—a habit partly forced on him because trade with London was erratic as well as lengthy, but also because precision was very conformable to his own nature. And it is these accounts, together with the pieces of china that still remain either with Washington's descendants or have been assembled at Mount Vernon, or donated to other museums that form the basic material of his handsome and scholarly book.

Quite clearly these records show that Washington had a passion for china. His taste was not idiosyncratic but very similar to that of other rich men of his time. His first purchases in the early 1750s were the brilliant saltglazes of Staffordshire and the equally brilliantly decorated Chinese export, and for everyday use he bought quantities of white stoneware—good, solid, durable earthenware that lacked sophistication yet was aesthetically pleasing. It was to be replaced 10 years later by a grand service of creamware, some of it by Turner but perhaps more by Josiah Wedgwood, running to some 250 pieces. Wedgwood's creamware took the fashionable world by storm in the late 1760s and early 1770s, and Washington was no exception. Washington, however, never purchased the great innovations of Wedgwood—the black basalt, the blue and white jaspers, or the great Neoclassical vases. Jasper was not invented until 1774; by then Washington was a great public figure and far too preoccupied to give much attention to the purchase of china as he moved from headquarters to headquarters. Also the acute shortage of British manufactured goods, and European goods for that matter, made it extremely hard for Washington's stewards and housekeepers to replace rusty tin plates with any china. A few pieces were bought in New York in 1776 and there was a large purchase at Philadelphia in 1782 at quite exorbitant prices—£12 for a soup tureen. Even in 1783 he had great difficulty in getting together a blue and white service of tableware for Mount Vernon. The Washingtons had to put up with mixed patterns and odd numbers of soup and meat plates. However, they had acquired by then a new ceramic connection—the French.

To own a porcelain factory was a distinction that many princes, let alone aristocrats, craved. Le Comte de Custine, who sailed in 1780 with Rochambeau, was an ardent supporter of Washington and of republican virtue (in the French Revolution he threw away his title to fight for Robespierre, only shortly afterwards to lose his head). He owned the Niderviller factory, near Strasbourg, and in his baggage he had a dinner service especially made and decorated for Washington. His initials G.W. on a cloud were crowned with laurel: Simple swags of flowers were the major decoration. It was elegant but simple, neither ostentatious nor expensive, and Custine presented it to Martha Washington when he visited her at Mount Vernon in 1782.

In the years immediately after the war, Sèvres (which curiously was declining in popularity in Europe) became à la mode amongst the sophisticated New Yorkers. Robert Morris and William Bingham both aroused Washington's competitive appetite with the splendor of their Sèvres table ornaments, and he was determined that America's "first table" would not be outdone. The Niderviller factory provided him with many pairs of figurines and Morris sent over a very splendid group, or *surtout,* from Paris in 1790. All of these figures were white, not extravagant in color or gilding—indeed they had none. Equally austere was the great Sèvres service which Washington purchased from his eccentric friend the French ambassador, the Comte de Moustier. This was the plainest Sèvres made, pure white with a little, very little, gilding. Even the most commonplace Sèvres was scattered with bouquets of flowers in color, but this very basic Sèvres of Washington has far greater elegance—dazzling white, just touched with gold, so right for the virtuous head of a virtuous republic.

Indeed, Washington himself felt the elaborate decoration and vivid colors were inappropriate and he seemed at one point about to decline a splendid suite of highly decorated Worcester vases, offered by his great admirer Samuel Vaughan, who was also responsible for the splendid marble mantelpiece at Mount Vernon. Although Washington's delight in and appetite for china never diminished his later taste is in marked contrast to his early purchases. All the major acquisitions—the Cincinnati china as well as the Sèvres—possess a lofty and restrained elegance.

Susan Gray Deitweiler has made a great contribution to the study of the decorative arts of 18th-century America. Her book is a mine of scholarship but she never gets lost, never forgets the human personalities, nor indeed the wide social context of Washington's cups and saucers, bowls and pots. It seems a pity the book was printed in Japan in a sadly grayish ink. □

Sir John Plumb was until recently Master of Christ College, Cambridge. His many books on the 18th century include England in the 18th Century *(Gannon) and* The First Four Georges *(Little Brown). For 30 years he has been an avid collector of both Vincennes and Sèvres porcelain.*

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ONLY IN AMERICA

Robert Kinnaman and Brian Ramaekers and their acute angle on decorative arts

By Alice Gordon

Robert Kinnaman likes tricky things, things that won't allow him to be a lazy looker. "This chair is tricky," he says, pointing to a black sackback, ca. 1780, whose fragile-looking legs and spindles shoot out recklessly in all directions, giving the impression that the chair would splinter if sat upon. "Americans who made this kind of furniture knew all the rules, but their limited means and unfamiliar materials caused very interesting mistakes. Whoever made this chair goofed a little. That's why it's so sculptural-looking. It has so many angles, such movement; it actually moves"—he wiggles it vigorously back and forth to demonstrate—"and it's lasted all these years because of its flexibility and tension."





Top: Late-19th-century weather vane attributed to New Hampshire farmer Fred Reed. *Above:* Kinnaman and cigar-store squaw, ca. 1870; Ramaekers by Eames screen.

Kinnaman and Brian Ramaekers' gallery is itself a little tricky. First opened 14 years ago, it has since 1977 been tucked away on a side street in Houston's River Oaks area. It is warehouse-size but inviting, contemporary in style—gray walls and carpet, exposed pipes—but a logical home to American designs from the 18th and 19th centuries and a smattering of things from the 1930s and '40s. All this is an uncalculated paradox, not a purposeful trick, but the embodiment of these dealers' view that a viable aesthetic transcends its historical context. "Our generation," says Kinnaman—both men are in their 30s—"was the first to play with the idea that what is important about an object is not what it was when it was made but rather what it is *now*. People tag us as selling folk art, but not everything we sell is folk art. Not everything we sell is art. What we sell exemplifies a certain attitude. American things of these periods are generally lighter, more direct, more easily assimilated than European ones, and American spirit at its best has a place in international art history. We want objects that illustrate that."

And what is it about their objects that illustrates Kinnaman and Ramaekers' particular perception of the American spirit? Perhaps the most pungent example is a graceful scarecrow from the Indiana-Ohio border. About eight feet tall, with one leg longer than the other, its slender knotted limbs are literally that—branches of un carved hardwood—and its chest two boards from a fruit crate. But its head could be mistaken for an African sculpture. Kinnaman describes it as "an African Giacometti, the closest thing to native primitive art that we have in America." That the comparison to Giacometti is apt negates any idea that this object is "rustic"; in fact, though some of the objects in the gallery are rough, none is rustic, and this aspect is crucial to the understanding of Kinnaman and Ramaekers' aesthetic. Part and parcel of their desire for simplicity of line and palpable American character is an appreciation of the abstract. Besides the "Giacometti," they have other objects that invite comparison to modern art: a pair of exquisitely braided and looped 18th-century andirons by "Calder," a buff-and-cobalt-blue stoneware jar by "Matisse," and quilts by "Vasarély Stuart Davis, and Chagall."

Back in 1969, when Kinnaman and Ramaekers made their move from New York to Houston, neither had ideas about dealing *(Continued on page 29)*



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THE DEALER'S EYE



Wooden scarecrow, Indiana-Ohio border

(Continued from page 26) in modern furniture, but therein hangs a tale. Ramaekers was working in an antiques store but had a business background. When Shell Oil offered him a position in Houston, he accepted. He wasn't of a mind to leave antiques entirely behind, and that moved him to suggest to his friend Kinnaman, "Why don't we open an antiques store in Houston?" To Kinnaman, who was "doing schlocky design work for $60 a week at Mr. Nobody's," the call was as irresistible as Mickey Rooney's "Let's put on a show!"to the neighborhood kids. So they scoured New England for the 18th- and 19th-century objects they loved—and could afford—and loaded a truck for Texas. Like the early Americans who created a distinctively American design tradition by distilling their European sensibilities, Kinnaman and Ramaekers, by taking these designs out of context, began to see them with new eyes. In Houston, far away from the "proper period fireplace where you put the proper fireplace chair," they found the discipline to see an individual object on its own merit. An outgrowth of that discipline, born of the love for clean lines, direct approach, and a certain American character, was Brian Ramaekers' discovery of mid-20th-century American design.

Ramaekers' involvement in the business, because of his position with Shell, has by necessity been passionate avoca-

Continued on page 30

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(Continued from page 29) tion to Kinnaman's steadier minding of the store. But while Kinnaman antiqued around the country, Ramaekers traveled around Houston itself. One day at a garage sale, a birch table caught his eye. It was designed by George Nelson in the late 1940s, and Ramaekers was surprised to find himself thinking he "had to have it." This simple inexpensive purchase started Ramaekers on a path of study and acquisition that has placed him in the vanguard of the currently hot movement toward collecting modern furniture, though to be such a leader was not his goal. For several years he continued his garage-sale scrounging and pored over "every old design magazine, catalogue, book, and tract I could get my hands on in the library." It was intense and essentially private study, but he was onto something, and word got around. One day a board member of the Museum of Modern Art in New York stepped into the gallery. "I hear you collect modern furniture," she demanded of Ramaekers. He and Kinnaman responded by "nearly falling off our chairs. Where did she find out?"

Though the gallery has fewer of Ramaekers' objects than earlier American designs, on any given day one might see a Charles Eames molded-plywood screen or a Noguchi boomerang glass-topped coffee table. The obvious question is how do these modern pieces look amid all the older things? To a visitor in the gallery, the answer is equally obvious: They just do. Kinnaman thinks it has to do with human continuity of purpose, a largely inexplicable temporal and cultural crossover. "There's really nothing new under the sun, and realizing that allows us to be more casual about what we do. It all extends from our conviction that an object should be exalted for what it is, not what it was. I really believe in this stuff, and yet people are always asking me why I sell it, as if I'm waiting to move into something more rare. Well, I took a trip to Europe last summer, and it only reinforced my feelings about what I do—not without shaking them up. I was in the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi, looking at a painting and seeing the same tree that Rufus Porter drew in Maine in 1835. I'm telling the absolute truth. Where the hell did Rufus Porter see a Renaissance tree?" □



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THE MASTER OF ST. CLERANS

A visit to John Huston in Ireland

By William Hamilton



One day it struck me the thing to be was a movie director. Pictures of movie directors brooding into the middle distance in romantic-looking outfits were rapidly replacing those of novelists and painters, just as they had replaced poets as the grand bohemians of an earlier period. Not only were these movie directors getting more and more worship, they were being paid through the nose—not to mention their access to the most gorgeous things rising out of the world's gene pools.

I had to come up with a career soon, because I was into my last hundred days as an army private in Alaska. How exciting it seemed to be through at last with all that the institutions expected and required of you! The army was the caboose of a seemingly endless freight train passing between me and the great adventure of real life since kindergarten. I wrote letters illustrated with cartoons to Frederico Fellini, Alfred Hitchcock, and John Huston (cartooning has always been my backup career) offering myself as an apprentice. I never heard from Fellini. A minion of Hitchcock's advised me the master of suspense employed only union people. But a personal letter came from John Huston. It seemed he, too, had been a soldier in Alaska. He'd like to meet me some day.

I reread the letter at least 50 times to extract every nuance and implication I could from its three brief sentences. It was a small letter, gray, engraved, "St. Clerans, Craughwell, Galway, Ireland." As far as I was concerned, aside from certain love letters and my first check for a cartoon, this was my greatest postal experience. I replied at once. Then, when no further advice about engineering this future meeting returned from St. Clerans after half a dozen more tries (including a few business-like typed letters in case the illustrated ones were conveying too much frivolity), I decided I'd better go back to becoming a cartoonist until the movie directing opportunity opened a little wider.



John, Tony, and Nicki Huston, St. Clerans, 1960

A year later I was not only a cartoonist, but $1,500 ahead of the game. I decided to travel in Europe as far as my stake would take me. In Spain I got a pair of riding boots that I had to wear for the rest of the trip because they were too clumsy to pack. On Savile Row I got a tweed suit. In Istanbul I had a couple of wonderfully luric shirts made. After two months the boots still hadn't broken in and the money was all but gone. The cheapest connection I could find back to New York flew out of Shannon Airport, Ireland.

At Shannon I was informed my plane would leave in seven hours. Eyes glazed over, breathing through my mouth, I prepared for a big wait, my mind providing what entertainment it could. Since the waiting room was in Ireland, my thoughts rambled among Hibernian things: Yeats, James Joyce, cable-knit sweaters, and the like. Suddenly, a small, dignified gray sheet of stationery engraved: St. Clerans, Craughwell, Galway, Ireland, appeared in my brain.

"Is Galway far?" I asked the Aer Lingus information lady. "This is Galway," she replied.

What the hell? I called information. You never know. It's absurd, but. . . .

"Directory inquiries."

Continued on page 36



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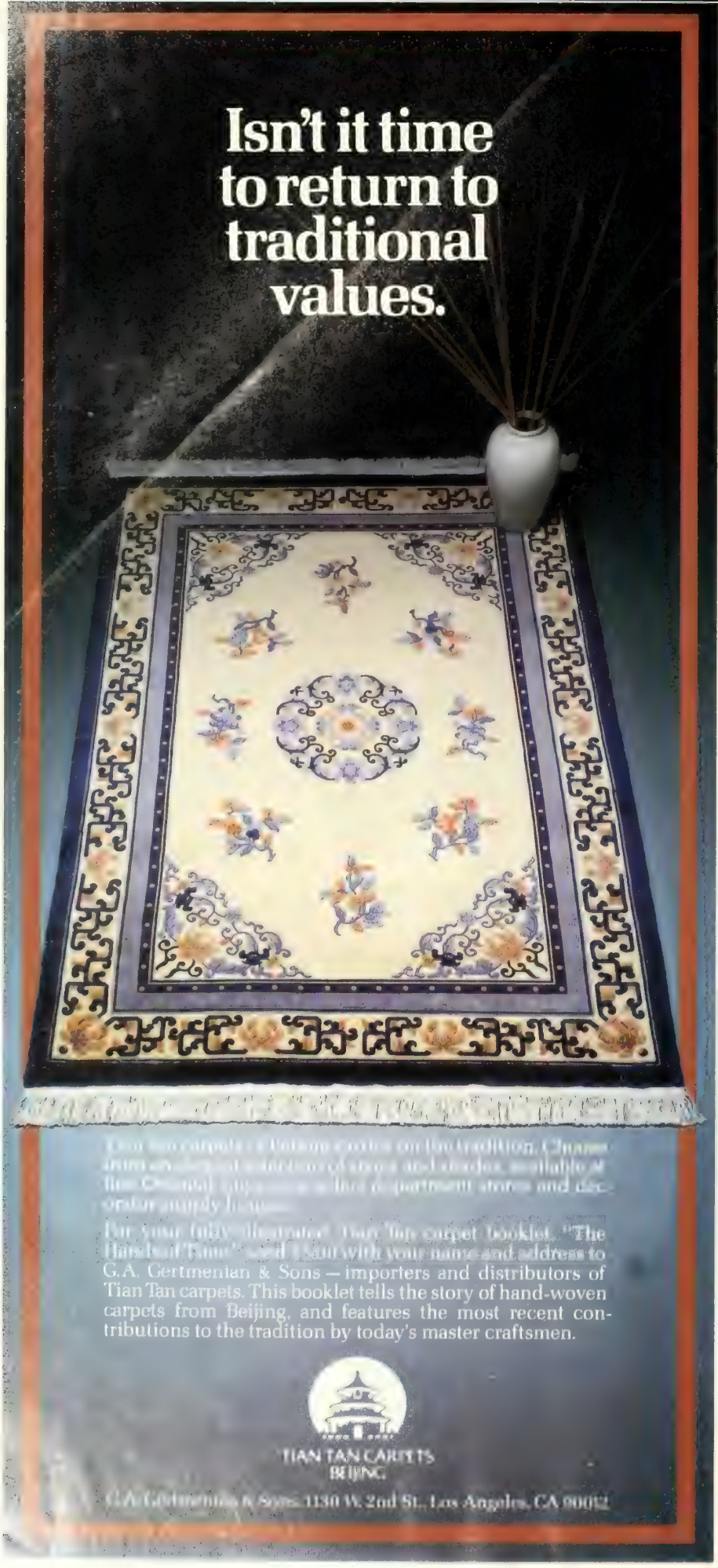
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(Continued from page 32) "Yes. John Huston please."

"6011."

"Really?"

"Sir?"

"6011. That's the number, eh?"

"Yes sir."

"Well. Thank you."

"Hello. This is William Hamilton. May I please speak to John Huston?"

"He's out riding at the moment, sir."

"He is?"

"Yes sir."

"Well. Really?"

"Yes sir."

"I think I'll drop out and say hello. I'm at the airport."

"Shall I send a car, sir?"

"Oh no. God no. No, no."

"Then you'll be taking the bus to Galway, Sir?"

"Yes, exactly."

"Then you'll be here for dinner?"

"Oh no, no—no thanks. I thought I'd just sort of drop by and say hello."

"Very good, sir."

My bus ticket left me with a total working capital of $12. I hoped that would get me back to the airport if this visit turned out, as wasn't unlikely, to be a fiasco. I tried to sightsee. It became dark. All I could make out of Ireland was an endless pair of stone walls flanking the road in the bus's headlights. The bus stopped. "End of the line," advised the driver ominously. A figure leaning against the great wall of Ireland stepped forward as I awkwardly disembarked from the bus in my tweed suit, Turkish shirt, French necktie, heavy suitcase, and the painful boots of Spanish leather. He approached me.

"William Hamilton?"

One of the effects of extensive travel alone in foreign lands is that you forget you have a name. How startlingly familiar it sounded.

"Yes?"

"I'm taking you to St. Clerans."

He took my bag, put it and me in a car, and took off at an amazing clip through the Irish night. Was this a taxi? There was no meter. How much of my $12 might this be costing? What if the butler I'd spoken with on the telephone, mistaking me for an invited guest, had dispatched John Huston's chauffeur for me without telling his master? *(Continued on page 38)*

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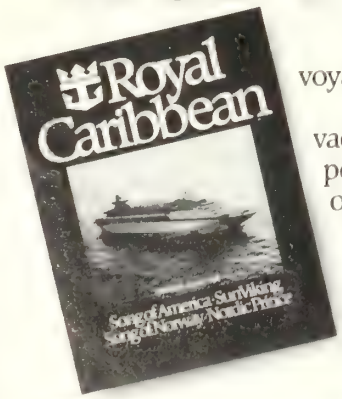
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(Continued from page 36) The driver told me he didn't drink and showed me his membership badge in an abstinence society called the Pioneers, as he careened around stone corners on two wheels. Perhaps, I considered hopefully, he'll kill both of us on the way, saving me death by embarrassment when we arrived.

A moon rose. At least now I could see the silhouette of Ireland. It was a long and lengthening trip. It felt over $12 already, and he was still hurtling along in a manner suggesting there was plenty of distance to go. Suddenly it occurred to me I didn't know what John Huston looked like. Awkward possibilities of what my ignorance could cause when we arrived played in my mind. I must have seen a picture of him somewhere, but I couldn't remember one. All my brain pulled from the famous-men file were images of Mao Tse-Tung, Groucho Marx, Papa Hemingway, and, from my recent visit to Turkey, Kemal Atatürk. Velocity decreased. We appeared to be heading up a driveway. The car stopped on expensive-sounding gravel and headlight changed to moonlight. A stone mansion loomed up on one side. A cow looked up from a lawn on the other. I could see a man standing on the steps. He descended and walked toward us. Could this be John Huston? He picked up my bag and bowed me toward the door. Obviously not John Huston, I decided. The vestibule at St. Clerans was startling. It was round and bare. In the center stood a spare streamlined sculpture, a Brancusi I guessed, on a black-and-white-squared marble floor. This sharp modern surprise in a world of cows and stone walls might be, I reflected, all I would see of the house once the master was informed of my arrival. But I was led still one room deeper into the house. How grand this place was! I saw at a glance little primitive Mexican tin pictures, great modern paintings, a classical marble horse's head at the top of the first flight of stairs—colors, textures, objects: all rich and beautiful.

I heard people speaking Italian in the room where the butler was routing me. *"Buon giorno,"* I would say—no *giorno* is day. Would *"Buona notte,* Signor Huston" sound like I was going to bed? How the hell would I know which one *(Continued on page 40)*

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(Continued from page 38) he was? There was more than one male voice in there. This room was blue. An astonishing row of almost life-size terra-cotta pre-Columbian figures were watching my entrance from a high bookcase across the room. Two of them were roaring with laughter. The other two were grim priests, ready to make me a human sacrifice. The living people, who appeared elegantly dressed in the soft light, some of it trembling out of a fireplace, all stopped talking and looked my way. A man who was quite obviously John Huston rose off a couch and smiled wider than I'd ever seen anyone smile. "Bill," he said, "so glad you could make it."

I stayed three days. My taste and ambitions grew instantly and ferociously in this grand setting. Something along these lines would do just fine, I thought.

Huston loved his things with a paternal sort of pleasure. He almost seemed to congratulate a picture on being so good, or a pre-Columbian mask on being so awesome. He patted a piece of French furniture on the back for being so perfectly proportioned.

"Isn't that nicely nasty enough to hang in a bathroom?" he gloated about a little Kokoschka drawing of a nude.

"I got these for nothing when we made *Moulin Rouge,*" he said of half a dozen posters of Toulouse-Lautrec.

Even things he never had affected him.

"I missed one of the very great Odilon Redons. Katia Granoff had it in Paris. Thirty-five thousand seemed too much at the time. I'm still ashamed," he mourned.

I wanted to get out of him what I should do next to become a movie director so I could begin my house, but it seemed rude. It would just have to take care of itself, I decided, like the changing of one's voice. The nearest I dared was, "How do you think a fellow should go about, ah . . . his life?"

"I believe," he said thoughtfully and seriously, by his flickering fire, with his Aztec gods watching, "a man should live, and die, beyond his means." □

William Hamilton is a cartoonist for The New Yorker, *author of a novel,* The Love of Rich Women, *and a play,* Happy Landings, *produced last year at the American Conservatory Theater.*



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BEHIND THE FRAYED FAÇADES, THE GRANDEUR OF NAPLES

By Olivier Bernier

A handsome city on the shores of the most beautiful bay in the world, a resurrected Roman city, and a warm, sunny climate: You could hardly ask for more, especially when it also boasted an operetta-like Court and hospitable grandees. Add to that a profusion of attractive and willing young women (and young men) and you can easily see why, in the second half of the 18th century, tourism was invented in Naples.

Even the disorderly, exuberant proletariat—the famous *lazzaroni*—might have been hired especially for a Rococo extravaganza. Beggars in torn velvet coats and their women wearing soiled but violent colors jostled liveried servants and grand ladies in their gilded, painted sedan chairs. Carriages as showily adorned as their occupants forced their way through the crowds. Narrow streets were almost blocked by vendors set up behind wooden stalls and selling everything from tripe to flowers. And over all, in a bright blue sky, shone an ever-golden sun.



Top, Rococo parlor of porcelain at Capodimonte. *Above*, Capella Sansevero with veiled Christ by Sammartino, 1753.

That, at least, hasn't changed. The brilliant sunlight and deep shade continue to add drama to a thousand little scenes: two men on a Vespa, one driving, the other clutching the pot from which a 6-foot-high plant rises; a basket, lowered on a rope from the third floor of a palace; two planks covered with bright red, yellow, or green plastic buckets; all still belong to that 18th-century atmosphere in spite of their modern components. Of course, there are many changes as well. The crowds still often look shabby, but they have lost their brightness, and much of their amiability. For the first time in its 2,500 years, Naples has become a serious city.

Many of its attractions remain, though. The luxury hotels along the Via Partenope look out on the ever-beautiful Bay. Charming little restaurants serve spicy, delicious dishes based on ripe *(Continued on page 44)*



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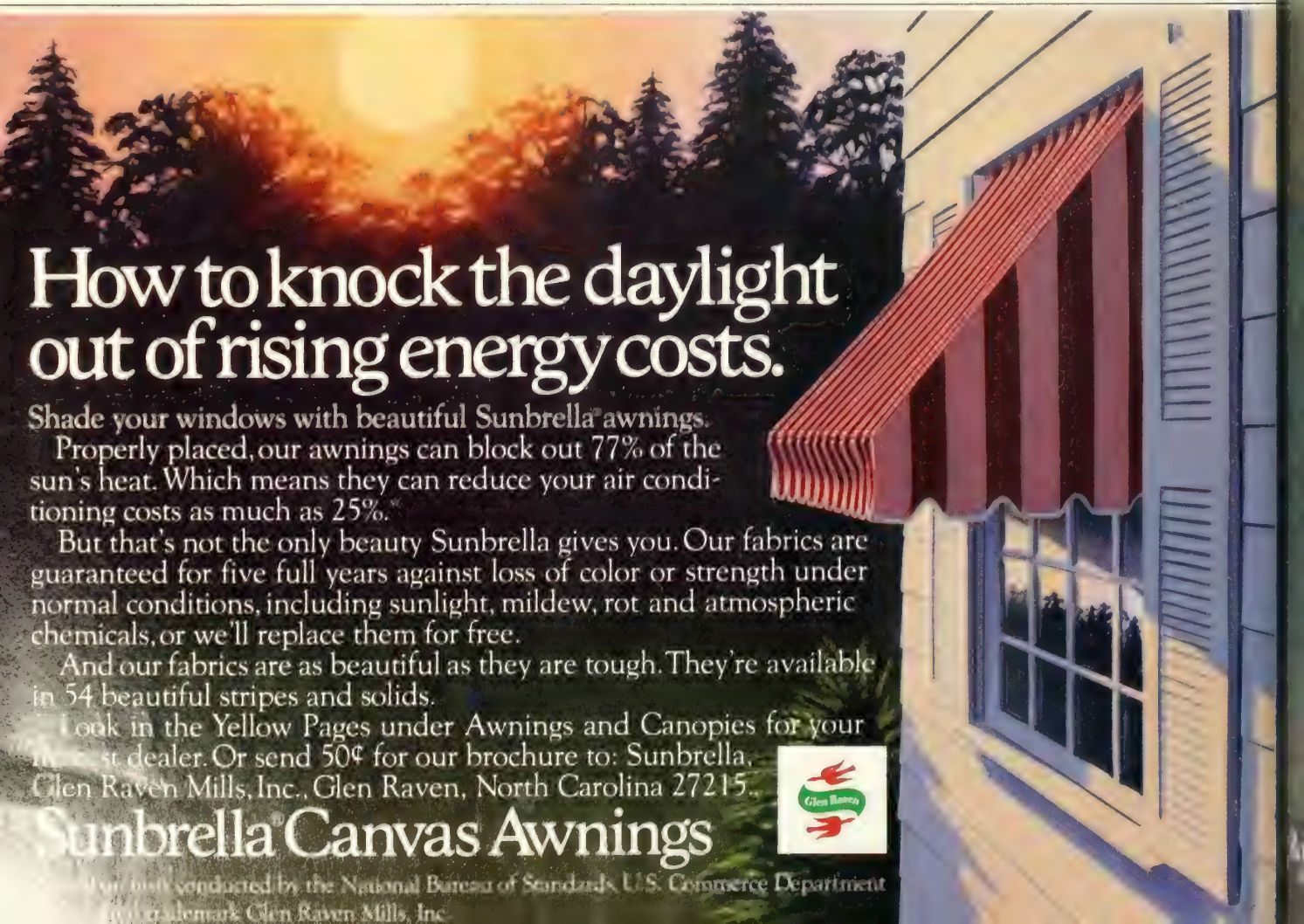
© 1981 Kahlúa Imported Liqueur 53 Proof

(Continued from page 42) tomatoes, virgin olive oil, and fresh herbs. The Teatro San Carlo, built in 1747, is still host to first-rate opera. And hidden in the old city or spread out on its edges are 18th-century buildings where all the attractions of the past revive for us today.

Like so many Southern cities, Naples can seem, at first, inhospitable. Outside the broad 19th-century avenues, the streets are lined with tall, austere façades; we cannot see the terraces that often take up the entire roof, and are decorated with awnings, furniture, and flowers. Even then a walk through the center of the city, with its bustling crowds barely parting to let the cars through, gives the feeling of being back in an earlier, less organized time, especially since frequent Rococo churches, most of which are now being restored, enliven the urban landscape.

Great sumptuousness and extreme poverty have always rubbed elbows in Naples. As you walk from the medieval Castel Nuovo and the Bay to the spectacularly luxurious Church of the Gesù Nuovo, you can see streets of tall, decrepit houses climbing up a steep hill, and they have obviously turned into teeming slums; but then, you turn right and, within a hundred yards, you reach the Piazza Gesù Nuovo. Here again, the contrast between the Church's stark exterior and its lush, golden interior is absolutely typical. Although it belongs to the Baroque period rather than the Rococo, the Gesù (finished in 1601) introduces a mood that, with only slight modifications, prevailed right through to the end of the 18th century. Green, red, brown, white, and maroon marbles are combined in ornamental motifs and surrounded with gilt bronze ornaments, wind-whipped angels, a polychrome floor, and a frescoed, coffered golden ceiling. Here, an altar is framed by twisted green marble columns emphasized by wreaths of gilt bronze leaves and topped by white marble Corinthian capitals, all against a frame of orange, white, and brown marbles. There, a great painting done by Solimena in 1725 depicts the expulsion of Heliodorus from the Temple with all the amiable drama, all the graceful movement we expect of the Southern Rococo. This dazzling, color-filled space, in fact, clearly belongs to the same aesthetic framework as the delightful, mid-18th-century white marble monument to the Immaculate Conception outside on the Piazza. Twisting and turning, adorned with reliefs and statues, this exuberant structure reaching up for the sky in a delirium of curves takes us right back to the old Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.

Naples and Sicily (the "Two Sicilies" in question) had for centuries been Spanish, then Austrian, colonies, when, in 1738, Charles III of Bourbon became their king, and promptly set about reviving *(Continued on page 46)*





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(Continued from page 44) trade and the arts. His first order of business was, of course, to build himself a country palace, so he chose the top of a hill with a spectacular view of the city and the Bay. It was aptly called Capodimonte, and, there, a building of impressive size was built with great speed. The site is beautiful, the garden attractive, the palace itself pleasing enough, but one of its smallest rooms is, by itself, worth the trip.

It was Naples's great good luck (and ours) that Charles III had married a princess of Saxony. In spite of the rigorous secrecy enforced at Meissen, then the only porcelain manufacturer in Europe, the princess Amalia was allowed by her father to take a few of its technicians along: In no time, a workshop was set up at Capodimonte and started to produce cheerful, colorful, yet elegant pieces. And in 1758 a whole porcelain room was designed by Giambattista Natale for the Queen.

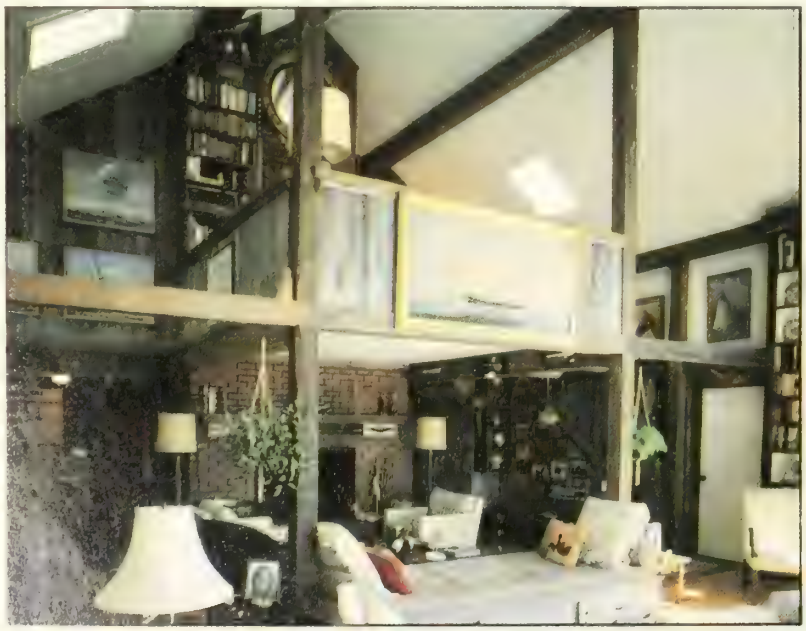
The walls and ceilings of this enchanting retreat are made of white porcelain adorned with purple and gold rocaille and polychrome chinoiseries. High-relief garlands and musical trophies frame a troup of monkeys who climb and play among the fruit, flowers, and ribbons surrounding the mirrors set in the center of each of the six panels. And there are also baskets filled with fruit, birds in flight, Chinese figures, parrots, exotic butterflies, all moving across walls and ceilings, up on the three-armed sconces, and down the chandeliers. Even as you step into this magical, frivolous world, the delicate sheen and bright colors of the porcelain combine with their reflection in the mirrors. The little room becomes a Rococo enfilade, a fairy palace such as only the 18th century could have dreamt up.

The rest of the immense palace will also repay inspection. There is more porcelain: table services, figurines, and large, complicated centerpieces. There are grand ballrooms, and rooms full of beautifully made, incised guns; and even paintings, not always first-rate, but still full of charm.

Almost immediately after he started to build Capodimonte, Charles III realized that it had a very serious drawback: You couldn't very well hunt up and down its almost vertical slopes, and, besides, the new monarchy needed an even grander showpiece; so he commissioned the architect Luigi Vanvitelli to design a local Versailles in the center of a plain some 30 miles from the city, at Caserta. The work started in the 1750s, and wasn't finished until the late '70s. By then, Charles III had moved on to the throne of Spain and been followed by his son, King Ferdinand IV.

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(Continued from page 46) 1,200 rooms, 1,742 windows, and 740-foot façade, Caserta is nothing if not majestic, but in spite of its relatively austere look, it is also quite dramatic. Rising above a two-story rusticated stone base, the two main floors of ocher-colored stucco almost seem to float in the brilliant sunlight, while the protruding, column-adorned pavilions terminating each wing come forward just enough to give accent to the façade. Then, in the center, the main pavilion, flanked by a white stone pilaster on either side, is also thrust forward to give the great entrance vault added emphasis: Four white marble columns support a triangular pediment and frame a deep niche topped by a little cupola. The strong Neapolitan sun and bold, dark shadows give life and movement to this restrained, already Neoclassical façade: What, in a colder climate, might seem dull, here looks solid yet alive. And the grand marble staircase leading up to the State apartments takes all this a little farther still: Its polychrome marble walls, white marble steps, and vaulted, cupola'ed upper landing form as impressive, yet controlled, an ensemble as any monarch could wish. It is Vanvitelli's great achievement that he designed a building that is cool without being cold, impressive without being overwhelming, and designed specifically, both inside and out, for the dazzling light that fills the plain of Caserta.

On the other side of the Palace, however, the view is disappointing. The long, thin, formal garden looks like mere pretension while the little mountains that rise in the background give the lie to this attempt at controlling nature. The park of Versailles may look very well where it is, but it does not take easily to the arid Neapolitan climate. Still, close to the Palace there is a charming English garden planted on the orders of Queen Maria Carolina who, like her sister Marie Antoinette, liked playing at simplicity; and if this supposedly natural little park is adorned with palm trees, classical statuary, and a huge waterfall, so much the better: No doubt it thrilled the Queen's best friend, her *cara miladi*, the notorious Lady Hamilton.

Inside the Palace, the endless succession of imposing State rooms neatly provides a tour of Neapolitan taste from 1760 to *(Continued on page 50)*

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(Continued from page 48) 1860. The charming theater, inaugurated by Ferdinand IV in 1769, is all pale blue, white, and gold, with a red trompe l'oeil stucco drapery over the royal box. In Maria Carolina's bathroom, all pink and gold, the lingering Rococo elements of the boiseries mix harmoniously with the Neoclassical furniture and fixtures, the copper and marble bathtub, for instance. Next door, the Queen's study is an enchanting blend of pilasters, garlands, and mirrors. A little farther, the Empire style, complete with military motifs in bronze, triumphs in King Murat's bedroom: The handsome, flashy Gioacchino, by virtue of being Napoleon's brother-in-law, was given Naples and promptly installed himself at Caserta. With the return of the Bourbons in 1815, however, bad taste takes over. There are great, dreary suites of rooms filled with bastard-Empire or abortion-Baroque furniture, over-gilded, over-sculpted, and in dreadful harmony with the fifth-rate historical paintings on the walls.

Of course, there was also a Royal Palace in Naples itself, and it is worth visiting if only for its view of the Bay. There, too, the 19th century at its worst tends to hold sway: After 1860, the new king of Italy had the State Apartments refurbished and installed the kind of pompous, oversized furniture that, paradoxically, seems to leave the rooms empty. There is, however, one charming, tiny, Neoclassical theater installed for Queen Maria Carolina.

After all this grandeur, it comes as a distinct relief to visit two small, perfect environments, one indoors, one out. The first, the Capella Sansevero, may at first seem a little grim: It is, after all, a funerary chapel, but here death's sting has been replaced by Cupid's arrow. To be sure, there are tombs, skulls here and there, some crosses, but all are reduced to their decorative functions and almost swept away in the profusion of ornaments. In the trompe l'oeil ceiling, a troup of saints and putti play about a radiantly blue sky. In a corner, a marble fisherman is entangled in his net; opposite a revealingly draped and pleasingly plump figure represents Chastity (at best, one cannot help feeling, a temporary state); even the dead Christ has been veiled, in marble also, so that religious emotion is transmuted to aesthetic *(Continued on page 52)*

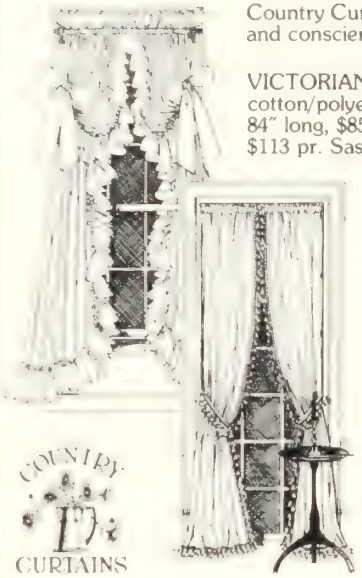
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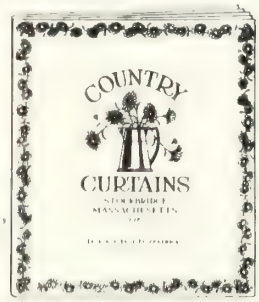
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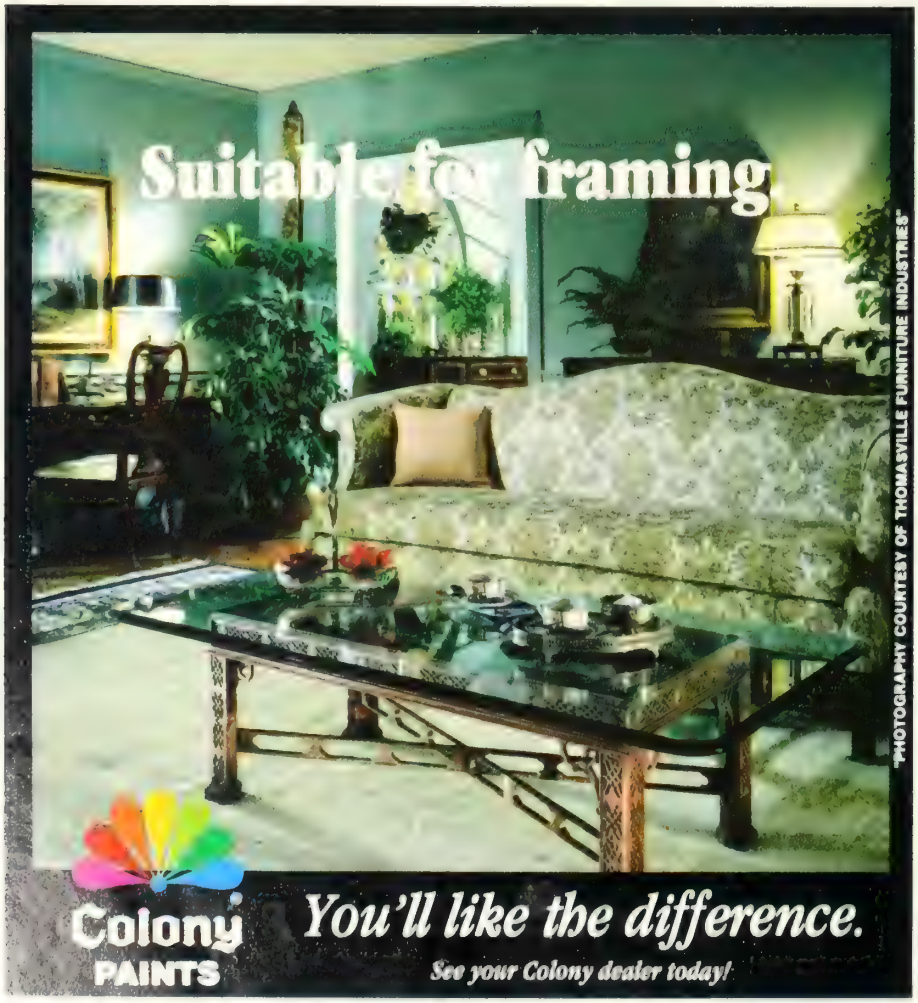
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(Continued from page 50) wonder. And everywhere garlands, clouds, urns, and putti tumble about in a sculpted whirlwind. Less than a place of death, the Capella is a first installment of the delights to be found in a Rococo heaven.

Remoteness of another kind is to be found just a few steps away, in the cloister of Santa Chiara. One's first impression, after passing through the vaulted passage leading into it, is one of extraordinary, blissful peace: The thick walls keep out the city's blaring noise and its jostling crowds. After that, there is time to notice that the walls on all four sides are covered with 18th-century tile landscapes surrounded with decorative frames and linked by garlands of fruits and flowers, all green, blue, and ocher on a white ground. There are tile-covered benches, too, which line the two crosswalks; even the octagonal columns that support the arbor are covered with more tile bouquets; and in the four open squares is the prettiest of medieval gardens. You can spend a lot of time in Santa Chiara, going from one landscape to the next, all in the shade provided by the luxuriant grape. In fact, the cloister is never empty, but don't worry: Your fellow visitors will be just as quiet as the nuns they have replaced, and probably a good deal better behaved. Neapolitan *sorelle,* in the 18th century, were famous for their confectionery, but not their virtue.

The last, and oddest, achievement of Naples's golden era can be seen opposite the Royal Palace: At the end of two semicircular colonnades stands the church of San Francesco di Paolo. Built in 1815 to celebrate Ferdinand IV's restoration, it is usually dismissed as a mere imitation of the Rome Pantheon. In fact, far from being a copy, it uses the forms of that building to recreate the stark, geometric forms advocated in the 1770s and 1780s by those architects of genius, Ledoux and Boullée. A true son of the 18th century, the King, in the second decade of the 19th, gave it one last and surprising triumph. □

Olivier Bernier, who has just given a series of lectures at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, is the author of the forthcoming book Lafayette, Hero of Two Worlds *(Dutton).*

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GRUEBY'S HIGH FAÏENCE

Rediscovering the fine pots of an American Arts and Crafts–period tilemaker

By Anne O'Shea

At last there is a resurgence of interest in the American pottery of the late 1800s and early 1900s, arguably the most important objects of the entire Arts and Crafts period. The work of such schools as Pewabic, Grueby Faïence, and Newcomb, to name some of the larger producers, has now fallen into a class of decorative collectibles that are prized by dealer and amateur alike. And perhaps the most significant example of this is the rebirth of interest in William Henry Grueby, a man whose high standards were to produce an exquisite body of work—and eventually lead to the demise of his Grueby Faïence Company of Boston.

Grueby was originally a maker of decorative tiles, and though their collectibility and value rival his pottery, they are similar only in terms of the glazing method used. Ironically, the production of Grueby pottery was at first intended only to make use of the very center of the kilns—an area too hot to fire the architectural tiles that were the company's main concern.

Above: Pots by William Henry Grueby, courtesy Jordan Volpe Gallery, New York.

Grueby's distaste for wasted space was ultimately to lead him to the most remarkable contribution to the pottery movement—his development of a natural matte glaze achieved without sandblasting or bathing the glazed surface in acid (both artificial means of producing a matte finish). The colors produced with acid and sandblasting weren't as predictable as those produced with Grueby's method, which was to paint the ceramic surface with a glaze mixture conceived to respond metabolically to the extreme heat of the kiln. Grueby shades were also truer in color, featuring ocher, brown, blue, yellow, and many greens, for which color variations, notably the cucumber and watermelon-rind matte glaze, he was best known.

The grainy clay Grueby used necessitated heavy potting and in combination with the thick glaze was an effective revolt against the slickness mandated by so-called Industrial Art—a movement defined by its critics as a pseudo-creative school witnessed especially by products that would later become known as Art Deco. The rebellion that Grueby was part of is the key to the entire Arts and Crafts movement. Increasingly, people proclaimed the fragmented tasks necessary to industrialism degrading to both worker and product. The craftsman, on the other hand, was ideally in charge of his product from start to finish. Grueby did not perform the individual processes that led to the final product, but he oversaw each procedure himself ensuring that the resulting piece was to his own specifications.

The production of Grueby ware involved the work of several people: the potter, the (*Continued on page 56*)



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WE'RE FIGHTING FOR YOUR LIFE

(*Continued from page 54*) modeling squad (a group of young women responsible for the application of textural elements such as stems, leaves, flowers, and simple sculptural reliefs) and the glazer. Because Grueby was directly involved throughout, his production costs were very high. Competitors with lower standards were able to copy his pottery at far cheaper costs. This was the primary reason for his company's eventual bankruptcy, but the cost of a Grueby pot was also a factor; $15 was a common price—and few people in Grueby's day could rationalize such an extravagant expenditure. But the charm and vitality of the company's work was never equaled by its competitors. The imitations employed not only the use of molds, which Grueby eschewed, but also acid-bath glazing and assembly-line decoration. Though there are a lot of these imitations around, they have deservedly fallen into anonymity.

The most popular Grueby vessels vary in height from about 5 to 20 inches. They are usually appliquéd with natural design elements and are two-toned in color (green with yellow highlights for the flower petals). The green mottled glaze is Grueby's most famous and most widely sought (particularly pieces where the glaze is broken in striations similar to those of a cucumber, with several shades throughout), but the ocher and blue colors are the most rare. And although the taller vases are thought by experts to be the most indicative of Grueby's flowing style, the rare find of a little-used design—such as the gracefully conceived image of the double-gourd—is a collector's dream come true.

Grueby continued to make tiles after he had abandoned pottery—in fact, he moved the company to New York, and several of his tiles can still be seen in the subway stations of SoHo and Greenwich Village. Some say that if he had stuck to tiles all along, he might not have gone into bankruptcy. Sad but true, Grueby's loss was posterity's gain—as a secondary enterprise behind the production of his tiles, Grueby pottery remains one of arts-and-crafts history's nicest afterthoughts. ◻

Anne O'Shea is a freelance writer living in Houston.

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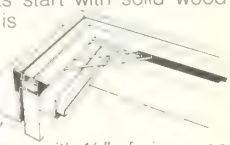
Perhaps the ultimate remodeling challenge is the basement. There's nothing basically wrong with basements — it's just that they're too dark, gloomy and stuffy. Here's the solution. It's the new Pella Sunroom Walkout that combines energy-efficient Pella Skylights and, as shown here, Pella Contemporary French Sliding Glass Doors. And what was once almost a dungeon has now been uplifted into a place that's actually liveable! Properly oriented, insulated, and ventilated, the Sunroom Walkout could have considerable passive solar benefits as well.

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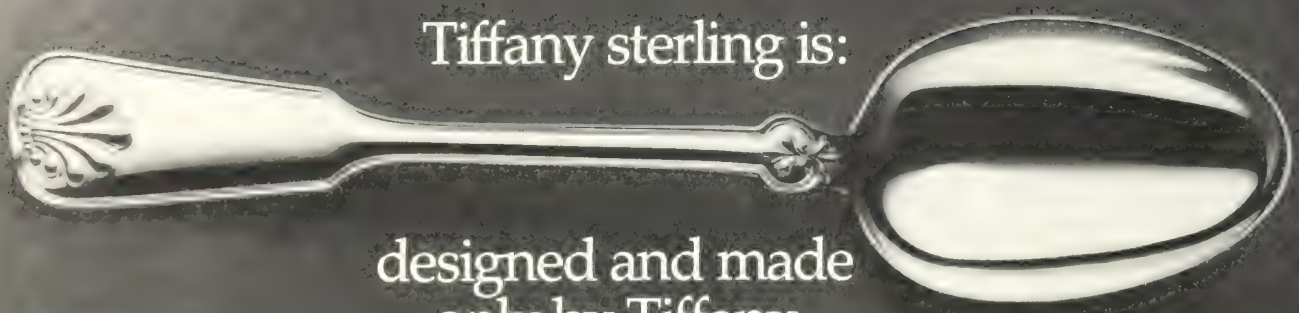


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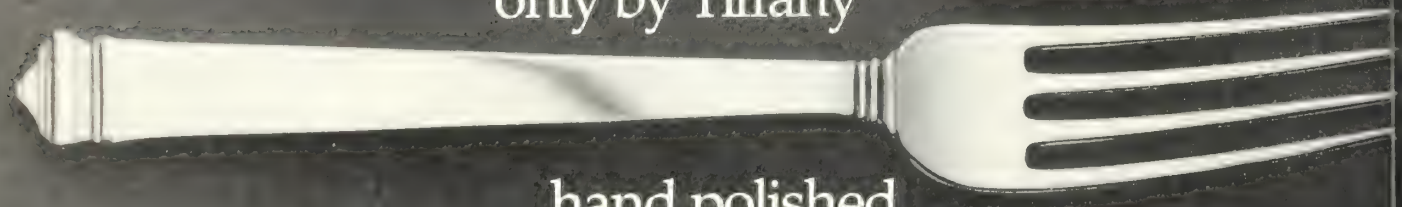
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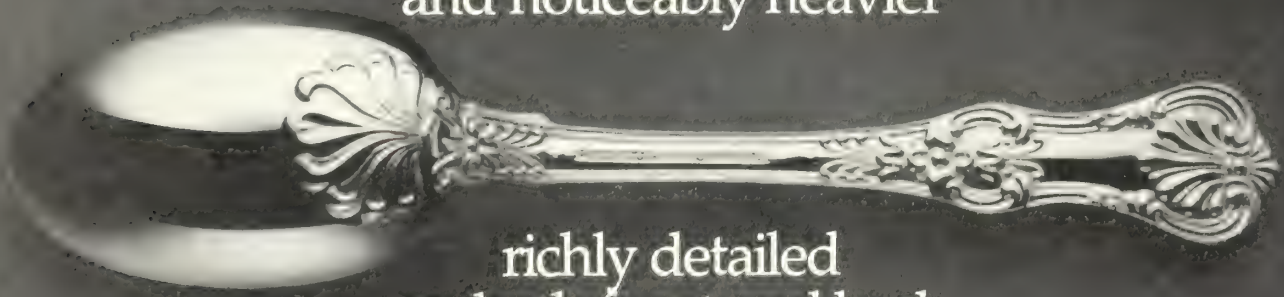
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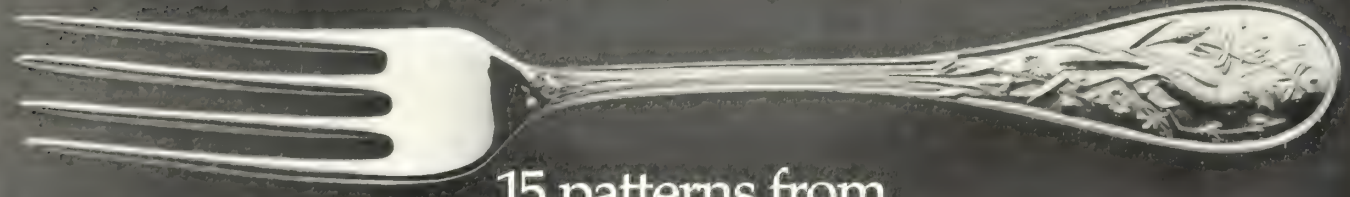
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ROMANTIC LODGE RENEW'D

David Mlinaric decorates a Georgian house in Owl Country

BY MARY SEEHAFER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DERRY MOORE









They call it Owl Country—the woods beyond London where this old lodge stands, restored by its loving owners and British decorator David Mlinaric. The house now looks much as it did 200 years ago, when it was the keeper's lodge on an estate landscaped by the famous 18th-century architect and patron Lord Burlington. Mlinaric, who is known for his work on the British embassies in Paris, Brussels, and Washington, D.C., and on the historic houses of England's National Trust, seems to have a natural facility for bringing out the relaxed side of English country life. Relying on local craftsmen, he began his work with the basics—a new roof, electricity, a well, and an access road. Then, with the attitude that "anything a little crooked should stay a little crooked," he started on the interior, having workers restore what could be restored and let alone those things that didn't need it. The results are "not absolute perfection—just as we wanted," say the owners.

Restoring the Georgian symmetry of the house meant pulling off an addition atop the left wing and angling the new roofline to mirror that of the opposite wing. Inside, since there are no corridors—rooms open to one another—Mlinaric took care that no color was emphatic, dusting each room with light shades. Mlinaric mixes patterns in rooms, one of his many talents, which he compares to composing music. "The eye, like the ear, can take in many harmonies if they're properly arranged," he says. □

Preceding pages: Wisteria and roses climb on the façade of the old house. Lavender banks the steps leading to the garden. *Left:* Traditional Norfolk rush matting in the drawing room has been made since the 16th century. On top of it is a Charles X needlework rug. Over the fireplace hangs a Dutch portrait dated 1635 and nearby, a rare pair of William and Mary hall benches.



Right: Dining-room cupboard holds pewter and Chinese export porcelain. Trumeau shows a painting of Foots Cray, an English house fashioned after Palladio's Villa Capra at Vicenza. Brass horns on the mantel are uplights. *Above:* The kitchen used to be the stables. Its brick walls were plastered and varnished to bring out pink tones, for a rough look seemingly softened by age. Furniture such as the painted 19th-century chest made by the Gillow factory, once relegated to servants' quarters, is now cherished for its rustic charm. Countertops are teak. *Below:* The garden is laid out in an early-18th-century formal style.













Left: In the bedroom, an 18th-century English bed with a "chestnut stuffing color" canopy. Quilted spread is made from several 19th-century chintzes. Bedside drawing is by Yves Saint Laurent. *Above:* Another bedroom was formerly the groom's quarters. Mlinaric brought the ungainly fireplace to life with a collection of Staffordshire dogs. *Below:* At the opposite end of the bedroom, a Victorian traveling military desk. Rare 18th-century English engravings represent the months of the year. *Overleaf, left:* In the bathroom, a Louis XV oval mirror and skirted washstand. Weatherboarding is mostly original. *Overleaf, right:* The stair hall is outfitted like an 18th-century print room.













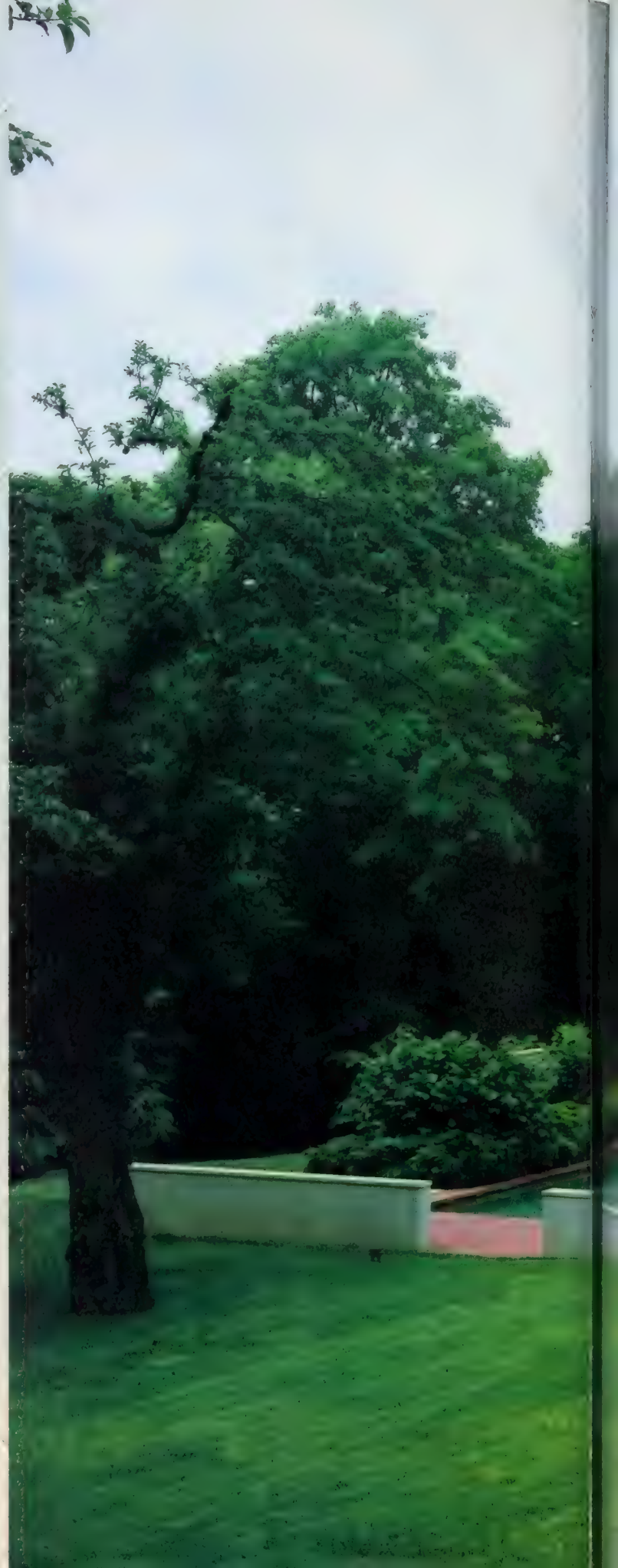
Left: Sloping walls made placing the tub in the center of the room a practical move. French Provincial cupboard is surrounded by beloved watercolors of birds' eggs. Vase holds herbs straight from the garden. *Above:* In the guest room, the bed's design is based on a 19th-century daybed Mlinaric bought at an Irish country house sale. Rare pair of flutist's chairs have needlepoint seats and backs.



A POETRY OF PLACE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM BARTOS









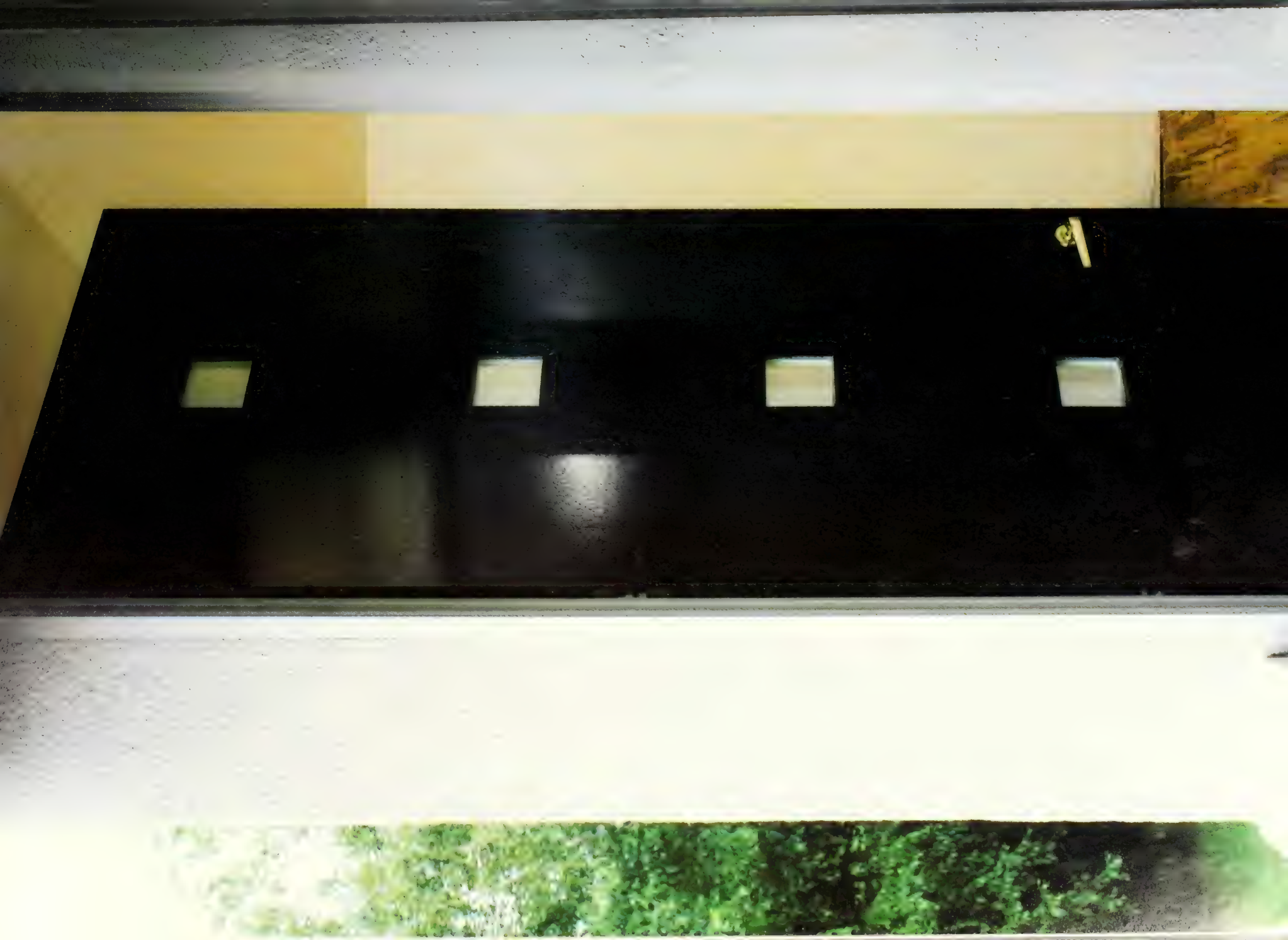
Preceding pages, left: Etched-glass panel from the front doors of the pool house.
Preceding pages, right: The pool is enclosed by a courtyard replicating the proportions of the 18th-century stone wall surrounding the property. *Above:* The double front doors, inset with etched glass.
Opposite: The stucco exterior of the pool house is painted a luminous gray that takes on subtly changing hues.

Restraint is not a quality that young architects possess in abundance, and no wonder: An art form tied completely to commissions, architecture does not often allow its newest practitioners an opportunity to express themselves fully. When given that chance, many of them try to establish a reputation with a single (and usually overwrought) building. What a rare pleasure, then, to find a work with the calm assurance of the pool house and sculpture studio that young New York architect Steven Holl has designed on a secluded site in a New York suburb for Leon Rosen, a furniture designer and president of The Pace Collection, and his wife, Kathryn Rosen, a sculptor.

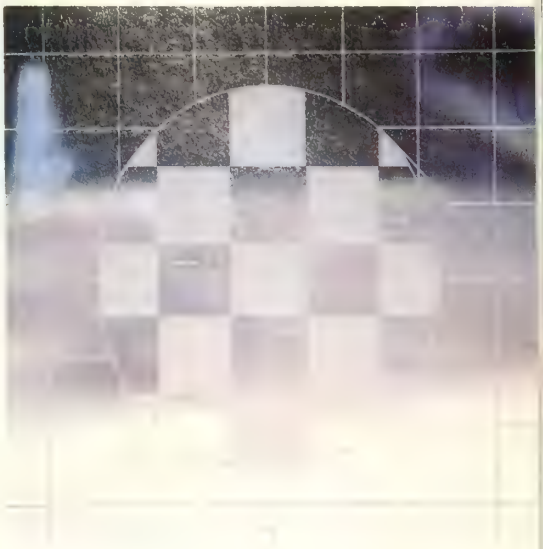
Holl's pristine pavilion is significant for a great deal more than its quietly impressive presence. Only a handful of contemporary architects have been able to synthesize traditional architectural forms into a new manifestation that is neither awkward, corny, nor blatantly imitative. Steven Holl must now be added to the ranks of those fe who have attained the elusive midd way between the extremes of Moder ism and Post Modernism.

Holl owes an obvious debt to the a chitecture of Luis Barragán and Ald Rossi, but he has borrowed spiritual rather than literally. The massive wa punctuated by openings that defer t the vertical plane, the delicate colo ings, and the masterly annexation surrounding space into the architec tural conception are all typical of Ba









ragán. The pyramidal skylight, the vestigial references to the Classical façade, and the air of poetic hindsight are all characteristic of Rossi.

But there is more: Holl makes an appreciative nod toward Art Deco—not the highly decorated early phase favored by Michael Graves, but the later and simpler Moderne period—which Holl took as a departure point for the thoughtfully detailed interiors, comprising changing room, bathroom, and a wet bar on the first floor and the artist's studio above.

The furnishings are sparse and utilitarian and allow the interior spaces to be fully appreciated for their pure sculptural strength. A piquant and playful counterpoint to the feeling of almost monolithic gravity comes by way of the etched-glass panels set into the pavilion's double front doors. Although they seem like free abstractions, they were actually based on Holl's conceptual sketches for the project. The dignity, appropriateness, and originality of Steven Holl's scheme give this miniscule structure (only 680 square feet) the magnitude of quality that transcends both size and scale. □

By Martin Filler

Left: Doorway and window of the second-floor balcony have a low-key Moderne feeling. *Above:* Etched-glass inset from front door. *Overleaf, left:* Round windows on second floor align with setting sun at spring equinox. Carina chair by Beylerian. *Overleaf, right:* Stairway to second-floor studio is roofed with translucent pyramidal skylight.







A boulder set into the terrace in front of the pool house takes on a Noguchi-like sculptural quality. *Right:* Wet bar on first floor has countertop of verde antique marble. Window is used as pass-through to the terrace.



Opposite: Two flowere
chintzes plus a splend
red brocade for th
draped bed bring
cheerful vigor to a hig
white room. In summe
flowers fill the hous
Below: The formal garde
à la française extends itse
in perfect symmetr



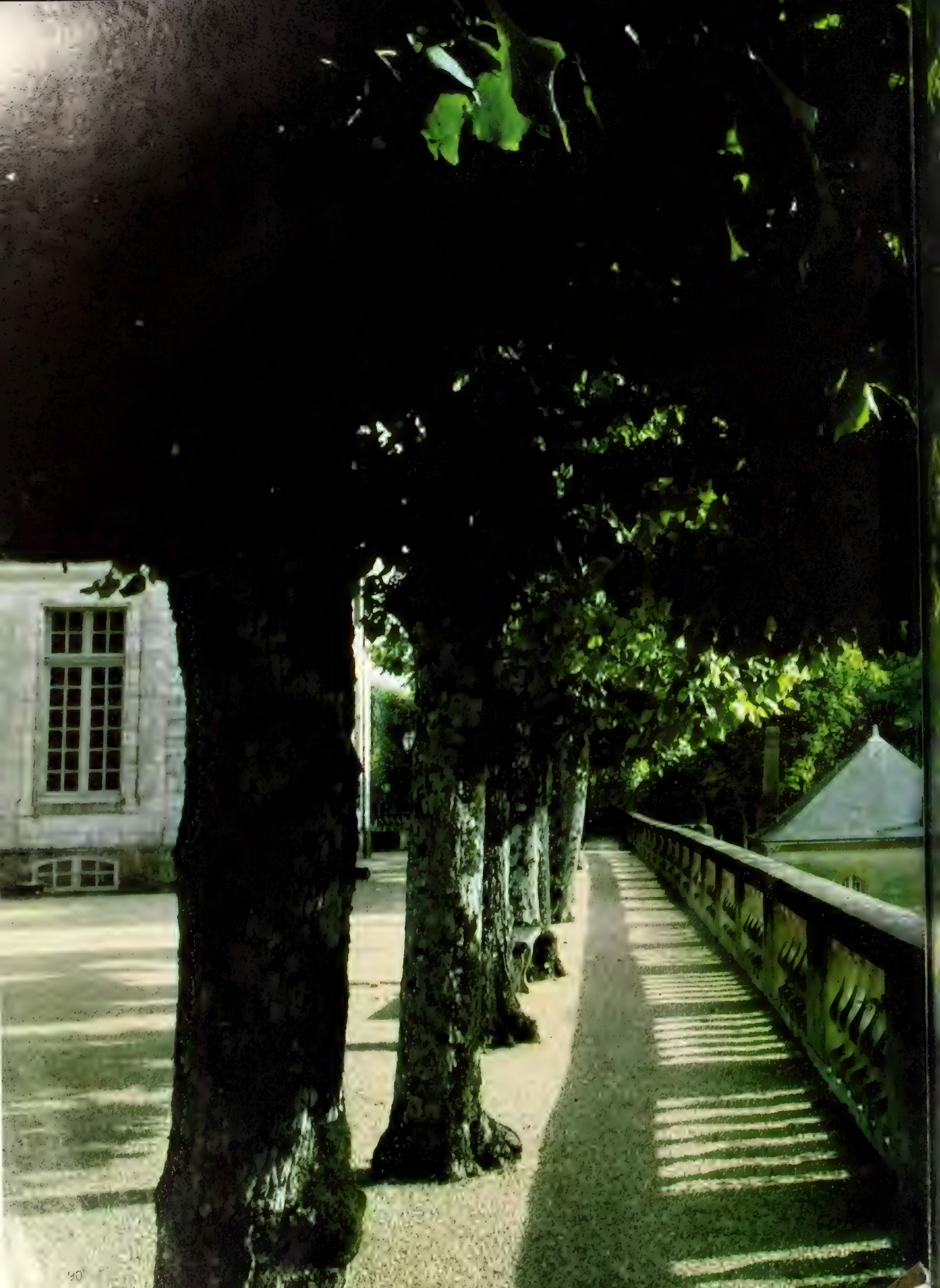
DOMESTIC CHARM 18TH-CENTURY STYLE

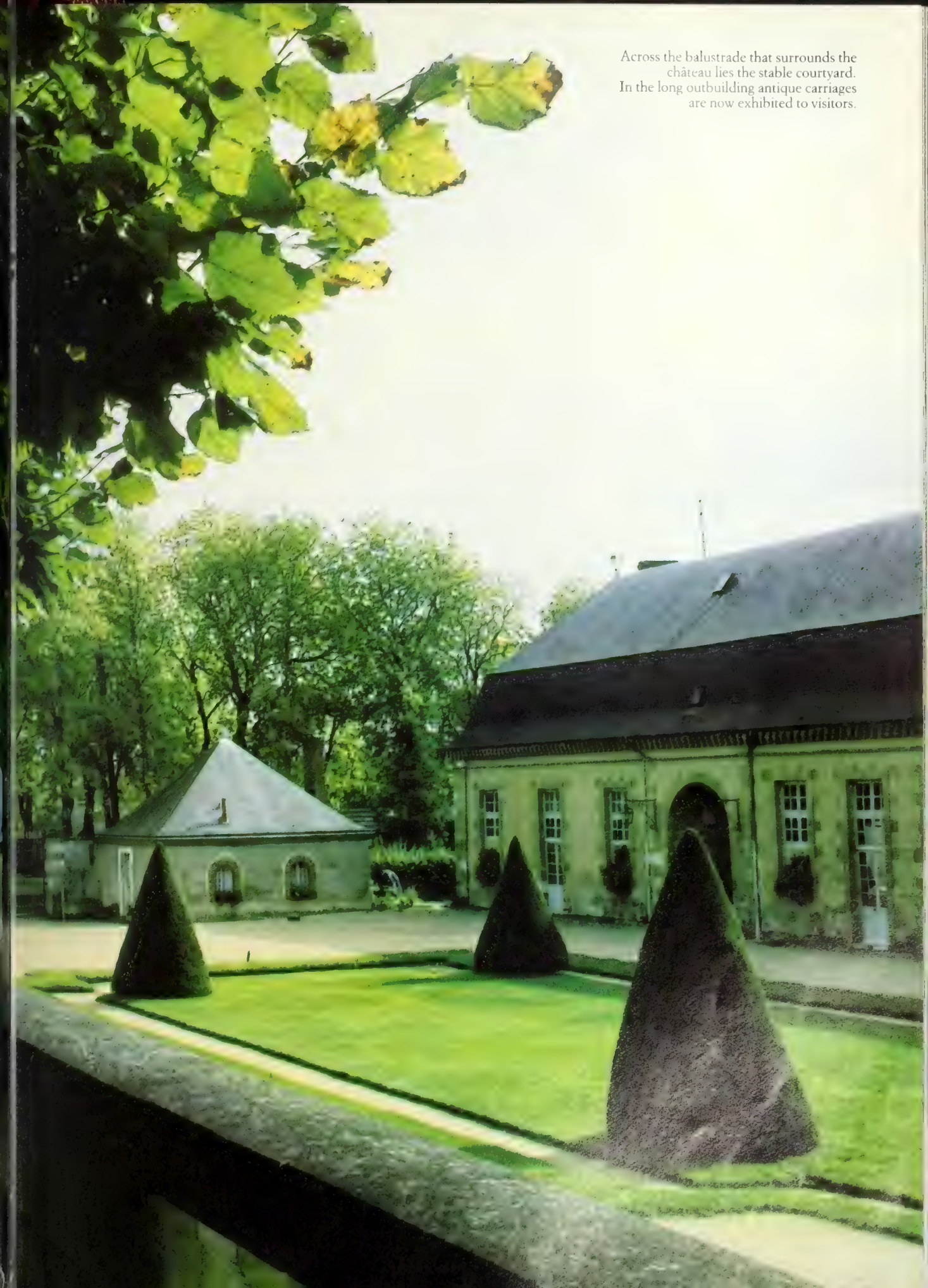
BY ELAINE GREENE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN RADKAI

Unusual among the French châteaus open to the public, Bouges looks inhabited, as though the family had just stepped out for a moment. It is a family we respond to in our time, one whose domestic viewpoint remains in rooms that are fresh, pretty, comfortable, and even imitable.







Across the balustrade that surrounds the château lies the stable courtyard. In the long outbuilding antique carriages are now exhibited to visitors.









Preceding pages: In the luxurious *grand salon*, the Viguiers returned the walls to their original pale green and installed sumptuous yellow damask draperies to set off the Louis XV paneling and large looking-glasses in gilded frames. A fine though unsigned suite of 14 Louis XVI pieces wears a chintz of Mme. Viguier's choosing. Daybed in front of Marnaval chimneypiece is signed Delion (master in 1757). *This page, top:* The *chambre d'honneur* includes a *duchesse* chaise longue and Directoire bed. *Above:* Façade displaying coats of arms of Marnaval and his wife.

An ancient document in its archives describes the estate of Bouges as "one of the best properties in the Berry region," including "seven or eight leagues of hunting grounds in beautiful countryside." The first recorded owner of the property was an André de Chauvigny, who was given it in 1218 by his brother, Guillaume, lord of nearby Châteauroux. A surviving description of an earlier building on the present château's grounds dates from the 13th century and depicts "a fortified house surrounded by walls and moats with a drawbridge." This would have been the structure that belonged to Catherine de Médicis, queen of France, who, records show, gave Bouges to her steward in 1547.

In 1759, Charles-François Leblanc de Marnaval, owner of the steel mills of Clavières and manager of Louis XV's royal cloth factory at Châteauroux, bought the estate of Bouges with its medieval château-fortress. At this point in the 18th century, successful entrepreneurs could live as well as the *grands seigneurs* and often eclipsed them in domestic splendor. Some bought noble country estates; some married into the landed aristocracy. Marnaval in 1753 took as his wife the heiress of a noble family of Berry, Marie-Anne Gaudard de La Verdine, and two decades later his only daughter made another noble marriage.

About five years after buying Bouges, Marnaval, who had ambitiously renovated the mills at Clavières, razed his old château. On its site, he built himself a small but expensive house in the then fashionable Italian style: the château we see today displaying on the pediment over the entrance the coats of arms of Marnaval and his wife. The name of the architect has been lost, but scholars see strong similarities be-



tween Marnaval's château and the Petit Trianon at Versailles, built at the same time by Jacques-Ange Gabriel.

Marnaval was forced into bankruptcy by business rivals and was unable to keep Bouges, which he sold to the Marquis de Roche-Dragon in 1781. The fortunate marquis, his wife, and four children were bypassed by the Revolution, and the children held the house until 1818. Detailed inventories made by this family in 1785 and 1818 were enormously helpful in Bouges's 20th-century restoration.

By the time M. and Mme. Henry Viguier bought Bouges in 1917, it had passed through numerous hands. The château had lost all its furniture and most of its paneling. During the next 50 years, the couple devoted themselves to bringing back to Bouges the sense of refinement and well-being they could envision as its heritage. They restored the interior surfaces, filled the rooms with excellent furniture of the late 18th century, and revived the formal gardens that date to the 19th century but reflect a long tradition in French landscape design. Mme. Viguier's refurnishing, probably the strongest element in Bouges's appeal today, was no mere scholarly reconstitution, for she brought to it her own personal 20th-century liveliness, especially in color and fabric choices. In 1967, the couple gave Bouges to the Caisse Nationale des Monuments Historiques et des Sites, which opened it to the public.

Bouges lies in the southeastern corner of the Val de Loire, some 60 miles southeast of Tours. It is open April, May, June, and October every day except Tuesday; from July 1 through September 30, every day; and from November 1 through March 30, on Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday. □



Top: The *petit salon* became the Viguiers' library. They built the open bookshelves and created the paneling, finding the wall color scheme in a painted Régence commode placed elsewhere in the room. A pair of Louis XV cabriolet armchairs in yellow damask is signed Pothier (master in 1750). *Above:* Many of the second-story rooms open on small balconies. *Overleaf, left:* For the dining room, Louis XVI chairs and console, Empire chandelier, English-style extension table. *Overleaf, right: Broderie* in boxwood and clipped cones of yew in a quintessentially French garden.







AN ARTIST'S DARING



REAM HOUSE

BY JOHN ASHBERY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY HENRY BOWLES





"If one takes architecture as the expression of an individual life, one starts at the center rather than at the face, asking what space is created rather than what plot is filled. Places thoroughly lived in become internalized in a series of adjustments till they represent a person to himself, a process the critic can try to follow in reverse, deducing the life from the quarters."

Robert Harbison, Eccentric Spaces

David Ireland's house sits, or squats, on an unremarkable street corner in a somewhat rundown, somewhat bohemian section of San Francisco's Mission District. An anonymous "builder's special" dating from 1886, it echoes only faintly the exuberant, polychromed Victorian architecture that proliferates throughout the city. Painted a uniform battleship gray, and from time to time splashed with the further protective coloration of graffiti, it is easily overlooked. Once you become aware of it, however, it gives the impression of deliberately trying to escape notice—a sedate, vaguely sinister presence.

Inside, however, it reveals itself as an "eccentric space" of considerable authority in a part of the country that has plenty of them, including the Hearst Castle and that bizarre Versailles, the Winchester "mystery house" in San Jose. But the mad grandeur of those establishments is here condensed to a snug set of barely a half-dozen small, sparsely furnished rooms. (Part of the ground floor is a studio rented out by Ireland and is separate from his own interior.) Nevertheless, the evidence of a firm hand in dealing with vagaries of space and atmosphere invites comparison with (*Text continued on page 104*)

Preceding pages: The three-legged chair in David Ireland's upstairs hall was in the house when he took possession. It reminded him of other three-legged things, such as the three-legged dogs kept by an African tribe he once visited. The notebook contains "three-legged stories" written down by Ireland. Wood and steel sculpture is by Peter Gutkin. *Left:* A cracked window pane framed in copper and a red-enameled "reliquary" containing collections related to the restoration of the house.



This page: The exterior of Ireland's house in San Francisco. *Opposite:* On a campaign chest in the dining room, a two-volume manual on tropical diseases alludes to Ireland's career as a safari guide in Africa. Above is a photograph of his mother's family, chosen because it matched the period and mood of the house.



the best surreal architecture California has to offer.

Ireland is a conceptual artist and his house is a work of art that can be lived in—must be, in fact, to be experienced whole. It is a combination often attempted but seldom realized. Surely, day-to-day life in Schwitter's "Merzbau" in Hanover must have been trying, marvelous as the interior looks from surviving photographs. Perhaps the most successful attempt is the town house that Sir John Soane built for himself in London between 1812 and 1814 (see page 158). Like Ireland's it presents to the world an ordinary façade much like that of its neighbors that is belied by the unorthodox unfolding of complex spaces once one is inside. And something of Soane's wry, brooding wit is present in the San Francisco house.

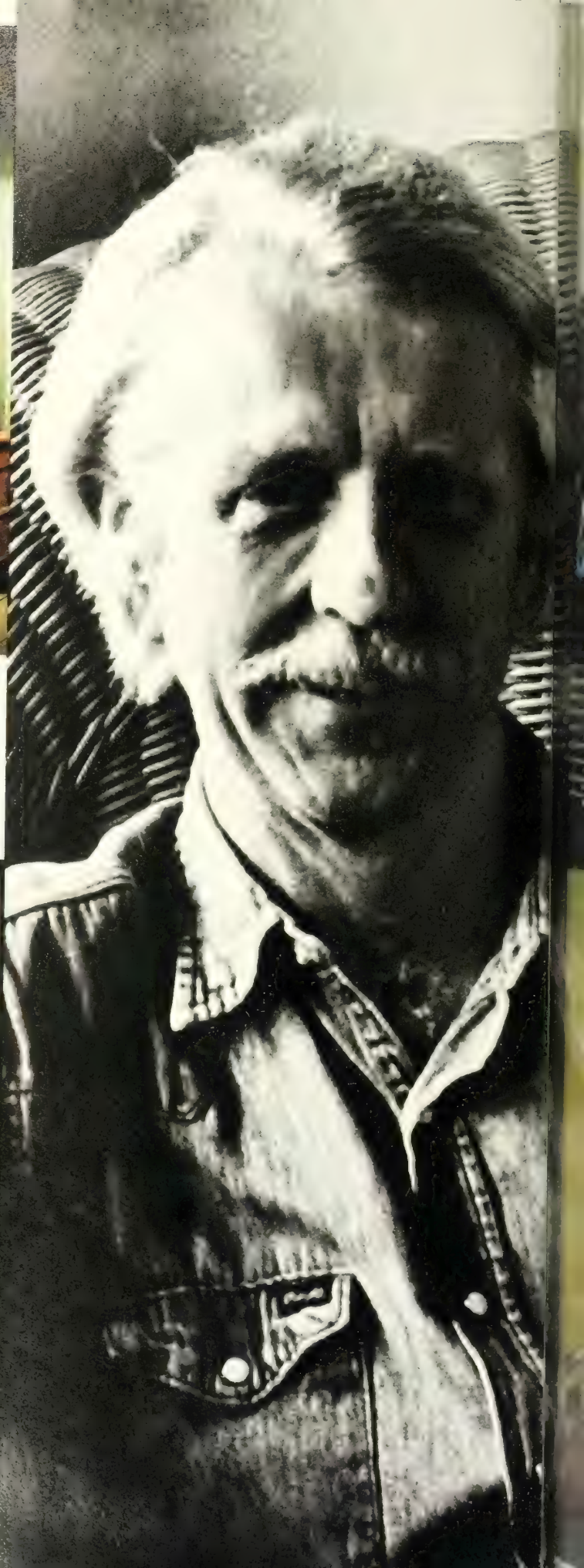
Ireland, born in Washington state in 1930, has had a footloose career that includes extensive travels in places like the Fiji Islands, New Guinea, Malaysia, and Afghanistan; in the late '60s he organized a dozen safaris in Kenya and Tanzania. Returning to San Francisco after a visit to New York in 1975, he saw and promptly acquired the small house on Capp Street from its previous owner, an accordion manufacturer who had lived and worked there from 1930 to 1975. Ireland soon realized that this would be no ordinary restoration job—"consolidation" is the word he prefers to use. "Slowly I progressed, as an artist, and I reached a philosophical point where I realized that the lively presence I was looking for in my paintings was here on the walls, as I stripped away and cleaned off the surfaces." Instead of refinishing the walls and floors, he (*Text continued on page 108*)



In foreground, arms of two rattan armchairs designed by Ireland (mates are in the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art). To the left, another reliquary topped by a monograph on Palladio between cement bookends. Rear: Tree stump from Mill Valley and white-cotton upholstered Italian armchairs. On the mantelpiece and the stool at left are wads of wallpaper stripped from the walls. To the right, an exposed but functioning TV, which Ireland says "echoes the house, being stripped to the bone."







Right: David Ireland. *Above:* The guest bedroom, with Oaxacan bedspread, Victorian bed surmounted by a pair of greater kudu horns. To the left, another chair from the house's *ancien régime* (chairs are for Ireland "symbols of authority"). This one holds two week's worth of newspapers commemorating the span of an exhibition of Ireland's art. *Below:* Door to bathroom.



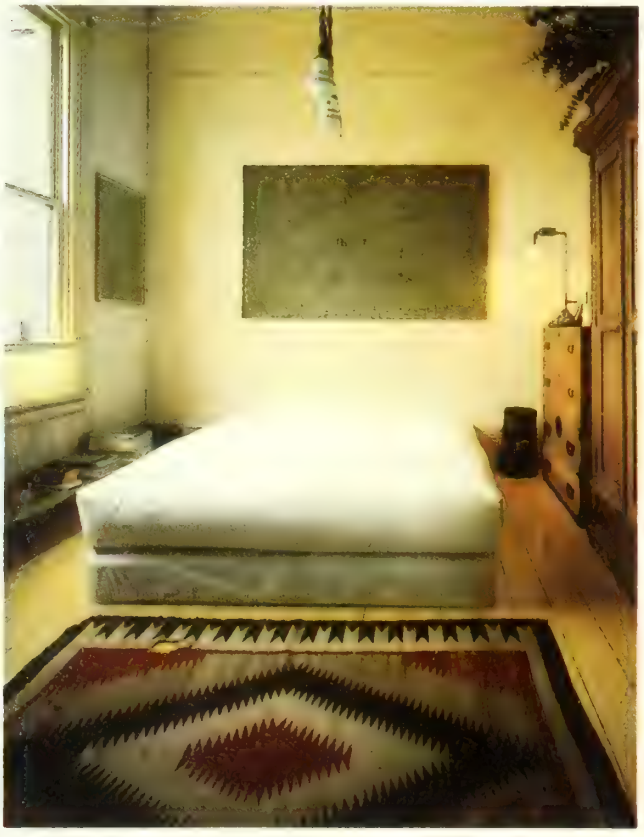








Above left: Ireland's study. Wire construction above desk is by Susan Marie Johnson. *Above:* A corner of the downstairs vestibule. *Below left:* On a stool, a jar of rubber bands removed from the daily newspaper after it was delivered and saved by the previous owner; a tape recording of the sound of the rubber bands being removed from newspapers accompanies it. *Below:* Ireland's bedroom; a cement picture by him hangs over the bed.



left them as they were after cleaning—pockmarked and stained the indefinite mellow colors of age—merely sealing them with a transparent polyurethane coating.

Decorating was thus mostly a question of hard work, since the internal surfaces were literally *objets trouvés*. Fitting out the place for habitation while retaining its somewhat comical austerity was a more delicate task. There are a few imposing pieces of furniture—a Victorian bed whose headboard echoes the curves of a pair of greater kudu horns fastened to the wall above it; a long, narrow refectory table (actually a carpenter's bench) in the dining room; and two overscaled rattan armchairs made in Hong Kong to Ireland's specifications. Despite their suggestion of some Maughamesque hotel in Malaysia, they seem destined to sit facing each other on the bare, polished floor of the sitting room, beside a strangely beautiful whodunit "sculpture" made of brooms in various stages of exhaustion, which were left behind by the previous owner.

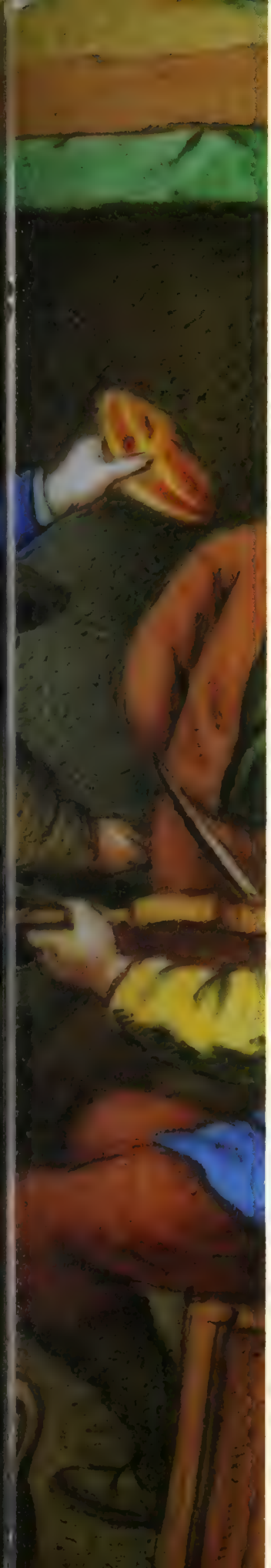
One enters the house through a vestibule like a large closet from which an unassuming staircase ascends to the main living quarters. On the ground floor, behind the vestibule, is the dining room, shuttered—since it faces directly onto the sidewalk—and therefore dark: a room seemingly kept for special occasions. In addition to the table and three campaign chests, the room is furnished with weathered captain's (*Text continued on page 192*)



The front parlor. On a metal cabinet is a plastic Coca-Cola carrying case containing jars of sawdust obtained by sanding the floors: "In an unknown environment, we order objects to make us more secure." Window has had its glass replaced with sheets of copper. Three jars on the table hold "100-year-old water," obtained by washing a 100-year-old object; "Hollywood strings" saved by the previous owner; and birthday cake, "a social relic" from the 95th birthday party of Mr. Gordon—in snapshot—a onetime tenant of the house. Copy of *San Francisco Examiner* is from January 21, 1981, the date of the opening of an exhibition of Ireland's work.

FREE AT LAST!
Hostages are in the air!
Carter OKs funds aid







Left and bottom: Enameled gold snuffbox by J.-M. Tiron, Paris, 1759. Sold at Christie's, November 1982, $88,000. *Right:* Gold *tabatière à cage* with miniatures of the duc de Choiseul's Château de Chanteloup by L.-N. van Blarenberghe. Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman.

BY NANCY RICHARDSON

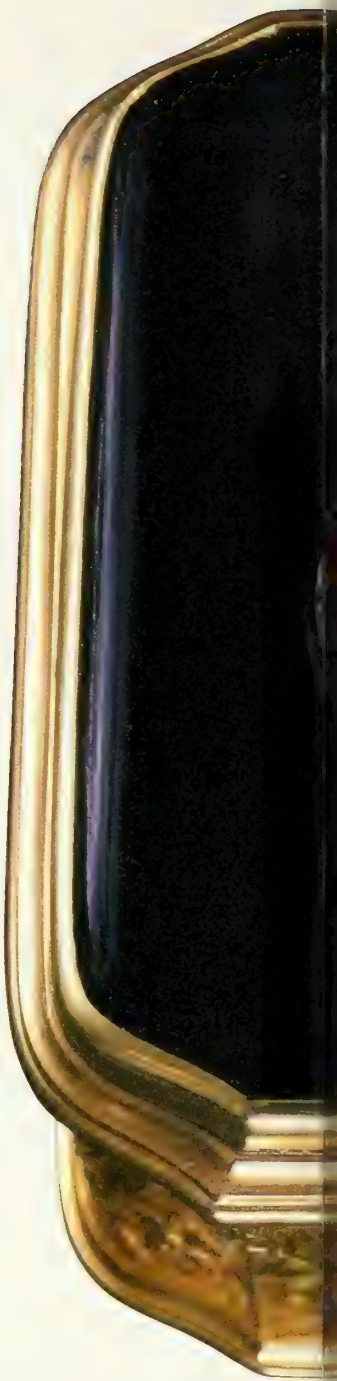
PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEE BOLTIN

A Pride of Boxes



Gold boxes are nice to touch and nice to look at. Some of them cost a million dollars, others just a few thousand. Both the major collectors of our era as well as the most prestigious museums have fallen for the charms of these tiny works of art. International experts tell us why.





Left and below: Jewel-inlaid table box, commissioned by Frederick the Great. *Above and right:* Louis XV presentation box sold by Elizabeth Parke Firestone at Christie's.



COURTESY CHRISTIE'S



r over a hundred years and most of e 18th century, the ultimate upper-helon present and accessory in Euro-an court circles was a Parisian snuff-x made of solid gold and inlaid with amel plaques and jewels. With the llapse of the guild system after the ench Revolution and the introduc-n of cigarettes in the early 19th cen-ry, both the craftsmanship and the bit that produced these boxes disap-ared. Nevertheless, throughout the th century and the 20th, a super-rich and sophisticated coterie, not unlike the court that originally commissioned them, has collected them passionately. For today's scholar and museum curator who brood over their origins and special beauties, they remain perfect little works of art embodying all the stylistic motifs of 18th-century decorative arts with a whiff of the voluptuous and often tragic lives of their high-ranking owners.

One of the most convincing hymns to the gold box has been written by Sir



Right: Etuis and sealing wax cases followed the decorative conventions for boxes. These from the Firestone sale, Christie's, New York. *Left and below:* Large, sculptural English gold box, chasing by George Moser, 1741; gold-framed Meissen porcelain box with pugs; both, the Wrightsman Collection.



Sacheverell Sitwell as a preface to A. Kenneth Snowman's definitive book, *Eighteenth Century Gold Boxes of Europe* (Faber & Faber), now out of print. Brought up in a household filled with furniture brought from Italy by his father, steeped in the tradition of Ruskin and William Morris, which lost no love on the French 18th century, and influenced even more by his sister Edith, the young Sitwell had no exposure to French taste. On a trip to Florence his father inadvertently caused his conversion by placing an 18th-century music box in a drawer in the hotel bedroom. The unexpectedness of its tune breaking into the night air, the discovery of the box in the drawer, the glimmering of the gold in the firelight, the imaginary scenes and people evoked—all



made a strong impression. Listen, then, to his later fascination with the gold box: "Each is a microcosm of a world of luxury. To hold [a] snuffbox in one's hand is to be carried back by magic to a *chambre fleurie* like that at Chanteloup or to some *hôtel particulier* in Paris. Or . . . instead [to] the suite of apartments lacquered scarlet *en vernis Martin,* installed by the Pompadour on the ground floor at Versailles." In the same essay: "There are innumerable fine snuffboxes of Louis Seize's reign, and not a few beautiful French Empire and even Restoration examples, and there are all the English snuffboxes which may be nearly perfect in point of finish and execution, if usually upon less fanciful and more sober lines; but the snuffbox, *per se et in excelsis,* must



ever be of the age and reign of Louis Quinze. Such. . . . are among the most lovely and entrancing objects made by human hands. . . . They offer a gamut of techniques and it must always be a fascination to think of the hands, wise, or foolish and beautiful, that held them. Theirs was a civilization that in another generation brought destruction upon itself, as much as for any other reason, from too skilled conversation in the most beautiful and eloquent languages ever perfected, and from too many bons mots. In this context a snuffbox was as powerful a weapon as a fan, and used by both sexes. . . . "

What made a Paris-made Louis XV gold box so wonderful, so perceptibly better than other boxes made elsewhere? Sir Francis Watson, former director of the Wallace Collection and author of the catalogue on furniture, snuffboxes, and silver for the Wrightsman Collection at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, states it plainly: "The success of the French box rests fundamentally on the technique of its manufacture. The French were really masters of making the hinges. It's miraculous—these things still close absolutely and totally. No other nation did that. The French persisted with an elaborate apprenticeship and strict guild regulations. That's why French furniture as well as boxes, whether you prefer them or not, are much better made than others of the same period."

Rather like the beautiful cigarette cases made in the 1920s and '30s, the habit of taking snuff that came into the open in the 1720s became an excuse for a carefully coded display and flaunting of a beautiful object. It was an intimate display of wealth. The handling of a box in itself gave a shiver of pleasure easily equal to the jolt of adrenalin provided by the inhaling of a pinch of snuff. Beyond the established convention of snuff-taking, the carrying of patches or bonbons, the gold box entered 18th-century life as a jewel and a pleasure, and by the 1730s and '40s it had become a social necessity. Our response to holding one today cannot be so different from the original response a box evoked, but for us they offer the additional possibility of a quick, Proustian excursion into an elite and high-style past.

Kenneth Snowman, who is also the owner of Wartski, the London jewelry shop, explains the appeal this way:

Text continued on page 182





Right: Gold and enamel Swiss box with grisaille scenes, ca. 1775, the Wrightsman Collection. *Above:* Double-lidded portrait box commissioned by Louis XV. Miniatures of members of the royal family. Wrightsman Collection. *Below:* Gold box set with hardstones and diamonds with a miniature portrait of a lady, probably mid 18th century. Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection.





Right: Spur-of-the-moment arrangement pairs a simple white china canister with metal "chief chair" gold weights, a gift from an African friend. *Above:* Birdhouse church is displayed as sculpture.

SOUTHWEST SERENDIPITY

When Louise Hubbard decorates, she is unfettered by the usual ideas about how a house should look. In the desert adobe she shares with her husband, John, her whimsical nature shines through in every room. Everyday things turn into still lifes on window sills. Even the nearby meadow, with its merry-go-round, is a veritable carnival. It's all proof that a house can be, in her words, "anything you like."

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NORMAN McGRATH





This 100-year-old Southwest house is a traditional adobe, but inside tradition ends. "Our house expresses who we are," says Louise Hubbard. She's a self-proclaimed Sunday artist with a capricious bent and a husband "who's amused by it all," but there's more to it than that. "My mother was an artist too," says Mrs. Hubbard. "She had her own sitting room decorated with old valentines, blue glass—all her favorite things. I'd never seen anything like it in any of my friends' houses. One particularly festive weekend another artist, my mother's friend Peter Hunt, came to visit and painted a rug on the floor. From that moment on I realized houses don't have to be so serious." One look into the Hubbards' field shows that this appreciation for the whimsical lives on: There's a merry-go-round out there, an anniversary present from Mr. Hubbard to his wife. "It's a used car according to merry-go-round aficionados," she says, "but to me, it's a perfect piece of sculpture." In the same vein, the Hubbards' wooden birdhouses, by an Illinois artisan who modeled them after cathedrals in his native Italy, are displayed as marvelous art.

The Hubbards joined a formal dining room and butler's pantry into one big country kitchen. "Frankly, I hate to cook," says Mrs. Hubbard, "but as long as we were creating a kitchen, I thought, 'Why not have a great one?' " The refrigerator is a visual delight, with real food—and artificial food, too. □

By Mary Seehafer

Left: In the living room, a Mies van der Rohe leather daybed and chair, and small Mexican drum tables. A Hopi blanket is folded on the daybed. On the wall is a montage by Mark Selig. *Above:* The anniversary merry-go-round from an Atlantic City carnival.

The living room's Mexican desk, inscribed 12-20-19, was probably a handmade Christmas present. Flame maple chairs from Natchez belonged to Mrs. Hubbard's grandmother and date back to Civil War days. Her mother painted the portrait as an amusing gift for a cousin's 80th birthday. Peter Hunt made half a chair leg into an angel on the far wall. Spanish 18th-century spoons hang nearby. In the foreground are miniature American Indian pots arranged with antique tools the Hubbard children found in the fields of eastern Long Island.







This page: In the bedroom, an 1880 Vermont quilt over the bed and a contemporary Mormon wedding-ring quilt from Utah. Black floor is painted brick. Wall hanging is by artist Peter Hunt. *Opposite:* In the hall, a tricycle from Provence; Navajo rugs on the wall and on the floor; sculpture by Jack Miller.





Opposite: The kitchen's 14-foot table was once a countertop in a store in New Mexico. Besides food, the refrigerator has other surprises in store. *Above:* The other end of the kitchen. The fireplace stove insert heats this entire wing of the house. The chandeliers are Mexican.



Above: Kitchen seating pairs leather Le Corbusier pieces with Mexican leather tables and chairs. Painted Austrian chest is topped by a 19th-century Ecuadorian carving of a saint's head.


PAGANI
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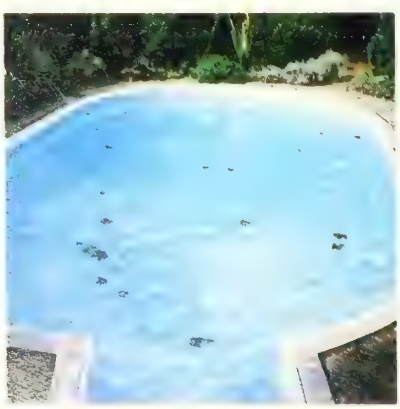


Painter Jennifer Bartlett creates a walk-in work of art

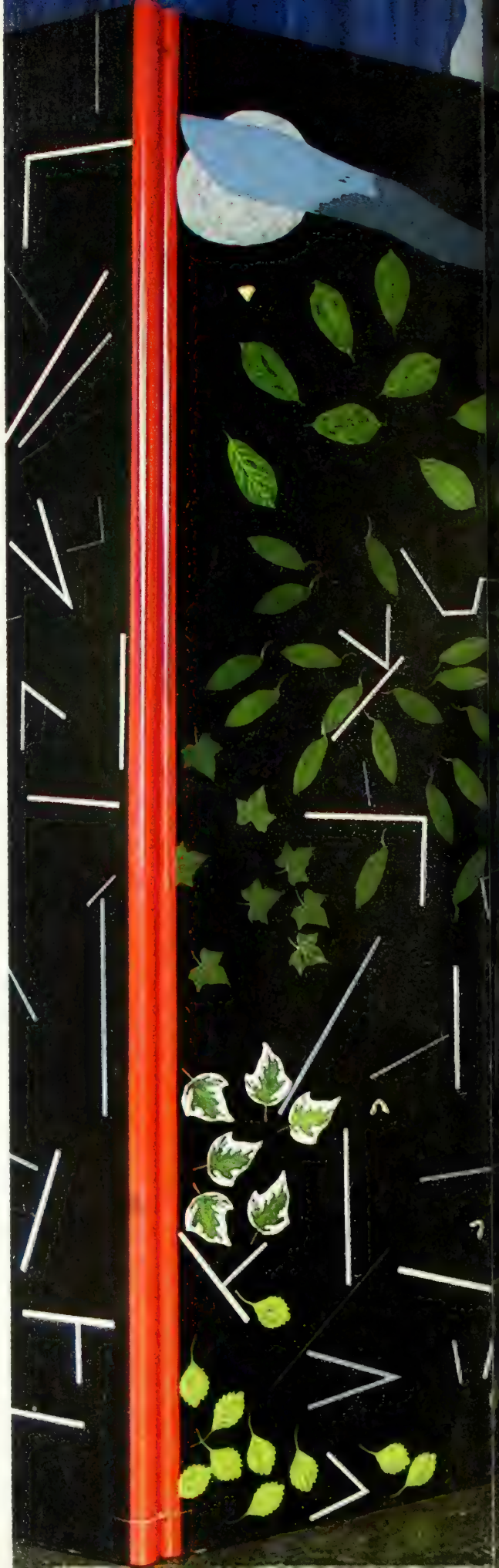
GARDEN OF THE MIND

BY ROSAMUND BERNIER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIM STREET-PORTER



Right: On the black lacquer screen: shapes of leaves from the garden, the curved white outline of the pool, *above,* and a portrait of Archie the cat. *Top:* Archie in person in front of the gate leading to the garden, which inspired Jennifer Bartlett's series of many media paintings.







There is a part of London that has long been in favor with painters and poets, novelists and historians, theater people and hideaway lovers. Perhaps the strangest and smallest of its many strange houses is the one that was turned into wonderland not so long ago by Jennifer Bartlett in ways made clear by these photographs.

The house was built some time in the last century as an annex to the Georgian mansion next door. Initially it served as a chapel, but has long been disaffected. Sarah Bernhardt is reputed to have fancied it as a London home for herself and her pet leopard. (The landlord wouldn't have them, though, and for many years afterward the lease had a clause to the effect that no wild animals could stay over.)

It is still a very curious house. Reached through a gate





Top: Artist Jennifer Bartlett against her screen.
Right: Wintry tree is painted on mirror in oil. Adding to the ambiguity, mirror partially reflects the large paper collage where abstract elements recall water, the curved pool edge, leaves floating.
Above: Next to screen, charcoal drawing on paper of the garden gate.







Left: Corner of dining room with panels representing the surface of the pool. The left panel is oil on canvas, the right enamel under glass. *Above left:* The gables of the house shimmer against the pool on a panel of enamel-coated metal tiles. *Above right:* Fresco eddies across fireplace wall. Fireplace tiles recall the colors of the pool and its surroundings.

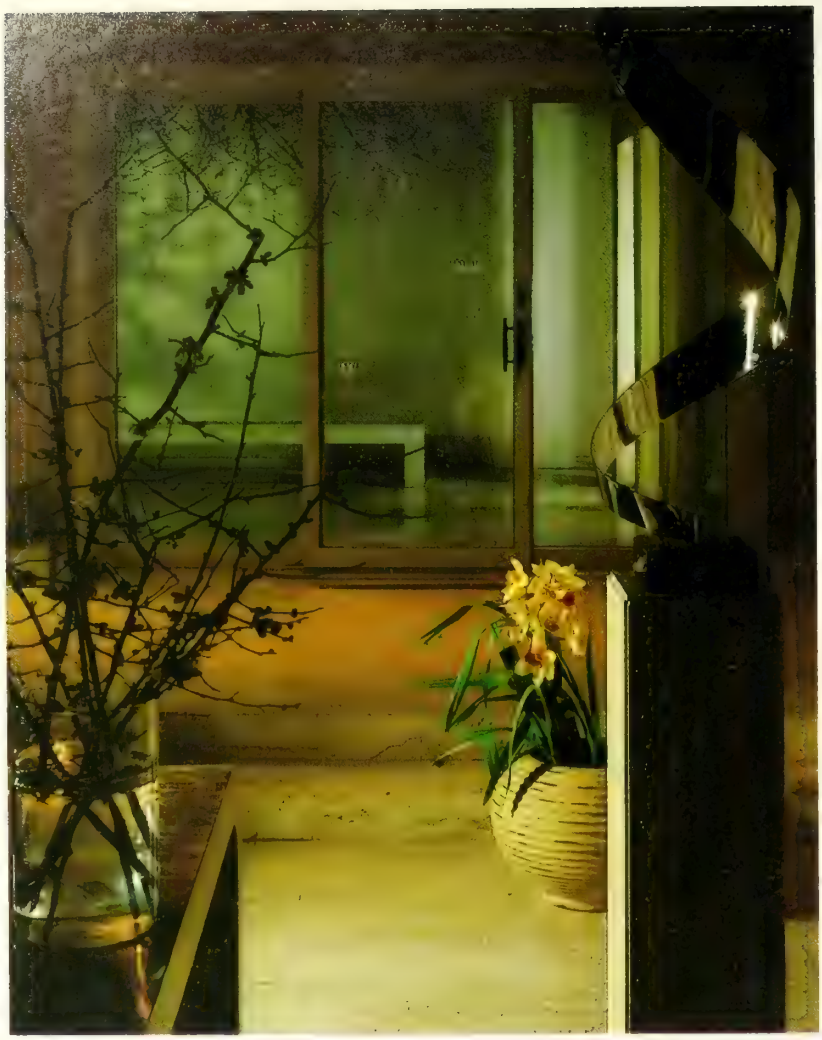
hardly large enough for Alice in Wonderland, it has pointed gables frothed around the edges with wooden frill, a bellying several-stories-high cathedral window, some Art Nouveau glass, and a general air of having been designed to be shaken, like a pepper pot. It could have been built by a Charles Addams *avant la lettre,* or by an eccentric unmarried clergyman with a fondness for *Hansel and Gretel.* Exactly who built it we shall never know, because the records were blown up during World War II.

After the war came to an end, the house fell into a very bad way and was in an even worse one when it was bought not so long ago by a young couple who shall here be called The Collectors. The Collectors are *true* collectors, in that they have long ago given in to their collections. The art lives in the house, that is to say, and they visit.

The guest to the house will therefore find an unblemished interior space filled with major works by Sol LeWitt, Carl Andre, Richard Serra, Cy Twombly, Frank Stella, Donald Judd, and Richard Artschwager, as well as by Georg Baselitz and Anselm Kiefer, among the newer German painters. The Collectors own so many Julian Schnabels that his recent show at the Tate came almost entirely from their holdings.

The artist whose work has most room in their house is an American, Jennifer Bartlett. No one remembers whether it was she or they who had the idea, but it was decided some two years ago that she should take the street-level dining room to do what she liked with it, in no matter how many media.

It was a bold move, but not a rash one. Jennifer Bartlett had worked *en serie* before, and on a huge scale. She had done it in a painting called *Rhapsody* that seemed to flow over a large part of the Whitney Museum (it was made up of 988 separate enamel plates). She did it (covering a 9-by-33-foot surface) for a building by Robert Venturi in Philadelphia. She did it for the Richard B. Russell Federal Bank and U.S. Courthouse in Atlanta. And she did it in the series of 200-and-some works on paper that has the generic title of *In The Garden* and was first shown at the Paula Cooper Gallery in New York. *In The Garden* is about bringing the outside inside (this was a lifelong *(Text continued on page 190)*



Opposite In the living room, the bases of the chrome and glass tables and the chenille-covered couch may be lit from within. Pillows are made of meshi silk. Handmade Rubaiyat wool rug by Edward Fields. *Left:* Steel sculpture by Kelley Gronley at the base of travertine steps leading to one of the outside courtyards.

TEXAS LIGHT AND TEXTURE

Designer Stephen Chase and architect Charles Tapley collaborate in creating a handsome house on the edge of the desert

PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI

Trying to find a very contemporary house in a small city in Texas is like trying to find a ranch in New York City—difficult. Instead of settling for a house that wasn't quite right, however, Mr. and Mrs. Ted Collins decided to build one from scratch. The 22-month project that followed proved to be a great exercise in teamwork, and Mrs. Collins feels that the experience was one of the happiest that she and her husband have had.

There were elements in Mr. Collins's bachelor town house—where they began their married life—that they wanted to preserve, such as a feeling of seclusion and the absence of a yard to take care of. Another requirement was that the house suit its Southwestern setting. The couple chose Houston architect Charles Tapley and his then associate Jim MacDonald to design an ultra-contemporary house on a cul-de-sac. Tapley surrounded the house with several freestanding walls to create courtyards, ensure privacy, and keep out the noises from the busy street behind. One wall also serves as a screen; it faces the two-story-high living-room windows and has a series of carefully scaled openings that let winter







Opposite: The tiered ceiling in the living room has been painted to simulate a desert sunrise. One of Robert Natkin's "Bath" series is on the opposite wall and *Double Pink Hibiscus* above the chrome-framed fireplace is by James Blake. *Above:* View of living room from the pool. *Overleaf:* Carefully placed chrome stripes and a large mirror expand and enliven the Bordeaux patent-vinyl dining room.

unlight in but keep the more severe summer sun out. Ta-
ley describes the finished look as a "nautilus opened up to
ecome a floor plan."

About the details of the decoration, Los Angeles designer
tephen Chase recalls, "The Collinses wanted a clean and
lick feeling without starkness . . . so I added the travertine
loors and tried to create warmth without clutter. There
eally is no motif, but rather a collection of things that blend
ogether." The only remnant of furniture from their town
ouse is an onyx-topped coffee table in the living room.

Light and color play an important part in capturing the
eeling of the landscape. The tiered ceiling in the living
oom—a combination of the architect's ingenuity, the designer's color sense, and the owner's direction—is carefully painted in graduated colors to echo a sunrise. Roses, pinks, oranges, and aquas are used throughout the living room, and, as in the desert, the colors seem to intensify as the day progresses. By evening, the colors have climaxed in a rich glow, perhaps most dramatic in the dining room where the Bordeaux walls deepen to create a perfect theater for entertaining. Mrs. Collins, though, feels more at home with a casual buffet for 50 to 100 people than a more formal dinner for eight.

The team has disbanded but Mrs. Collins says she would never hesitate to ask for some decorative "coaching" if the need arose. □ *By Gabrielle Winkel*





Opposite: A huge sunken Jacuzzi whirlpool bath dominates the master bathroom, also a mini-gym for the Collinses. *Above:* A freestanding wall, seen through the living-room windows, keeps out the strong sun. Copies of Louis XV armchairs are covered in a Korean silk. Benches are topped with antique kilims. *Below:* The house as seen from the street.











BOUNTIFUL LIVING IN BUCKS COUNTY

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID MASSEY

After spending 34 years in France and England, Thomas B. Kyle returned to the United States, but not before he determined that he would bring Europe with him, as art and furniture, as an attitude toward houses, as a way of life. Now a Pennsylvania farm agreeably accommodates his large collection of European furnishings in a setting that is the epitome of American openness.

Opposite and above: A working horse barn was turned into a center for summer living and entertaining. Local-stone floor, Chippendale-style railings, and many windows are new.



Thomas Kyle searched the American Northeast for a country property and settled on the gentle hills of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Kyle's friend of many years, Jerome F. Murray, had grown up in the area and remembered it fondly, but what appealed most to both men was the landscape's resemblance to the English and French countryside.

The 100-acre farm includes woods, orchards, 35 acres of mowed lawns, a pond, and several buildings spanning two-and-a-half centuries. In 1720, a niece of William Penn received as a wedding present the first building on the land, a small house that is used now as a kitchen. During 1979 and 1980, Kyle and Murray polished up a guest house, added several large rooms to the main house, which serves as winter quarters, and turned a horse barn of recent vintage into an airy summer retreat. Architectural design is Murray's specialty, and interior design Kyle's. Although they had excellent local workmen and help from abroad—a French artist who did trompe l'oeil painting and London experts who made all the curtains—the men performed some of the labor themselves. The rusticated walls of the dining room, for example, are their work, and they are currently altering the kitchen in the main house.

Gardens are ambitious here—formal parterres, vegetable and cutting gardens, a greenhouse—and gardening is a steady occupation. Kyle says, "We have some help, but we garden ourselves all summer, sometimes all day long." For cooking there is also staff, but the hosts, who entertain lavishly and often, do a good deal of food preparation.

Some guests in this beautifully appointed house can imagine they are in England: No room is forbidden to the six dogs, and the summer's heat or the presence of a fly or two never interferes with Kyle and Murray's enthusiasm for outdoor living. "It is that attitude," one guest told us, "of being absolutely casual—both about luxury and about imperfection—that makes you think you are on the other side of the Atlantic." □ *By Elaine Greene*

Right: Jerome Murray designed the main drawing room. Furniture was collected in decades abroad. *Above:* Stone guest house adjoins main house. Sharing grounds are peacocks and sheep.





Right: The ceiling of the master bedroom—this is its sitting area—was decorated in Neoclassical style by André Debreuil, who came from Paris to paint several walls and ceilings in the house. *Above:* The bedroom chintz and chintz elsewhere in the buildings is by Colefax and Fowler. This particular print came from Rose Cumming and the others from Brunschwig & Fils. Bedroom wallpaper is by Brunschwig. Chinese objects include head-bobbing figure from Brighton Pavilion on the gilded Italian table below the mirror and the pagodas in sitting area. *Below:* Bathroom with early-18th-century French terra-cotta sphinxes.







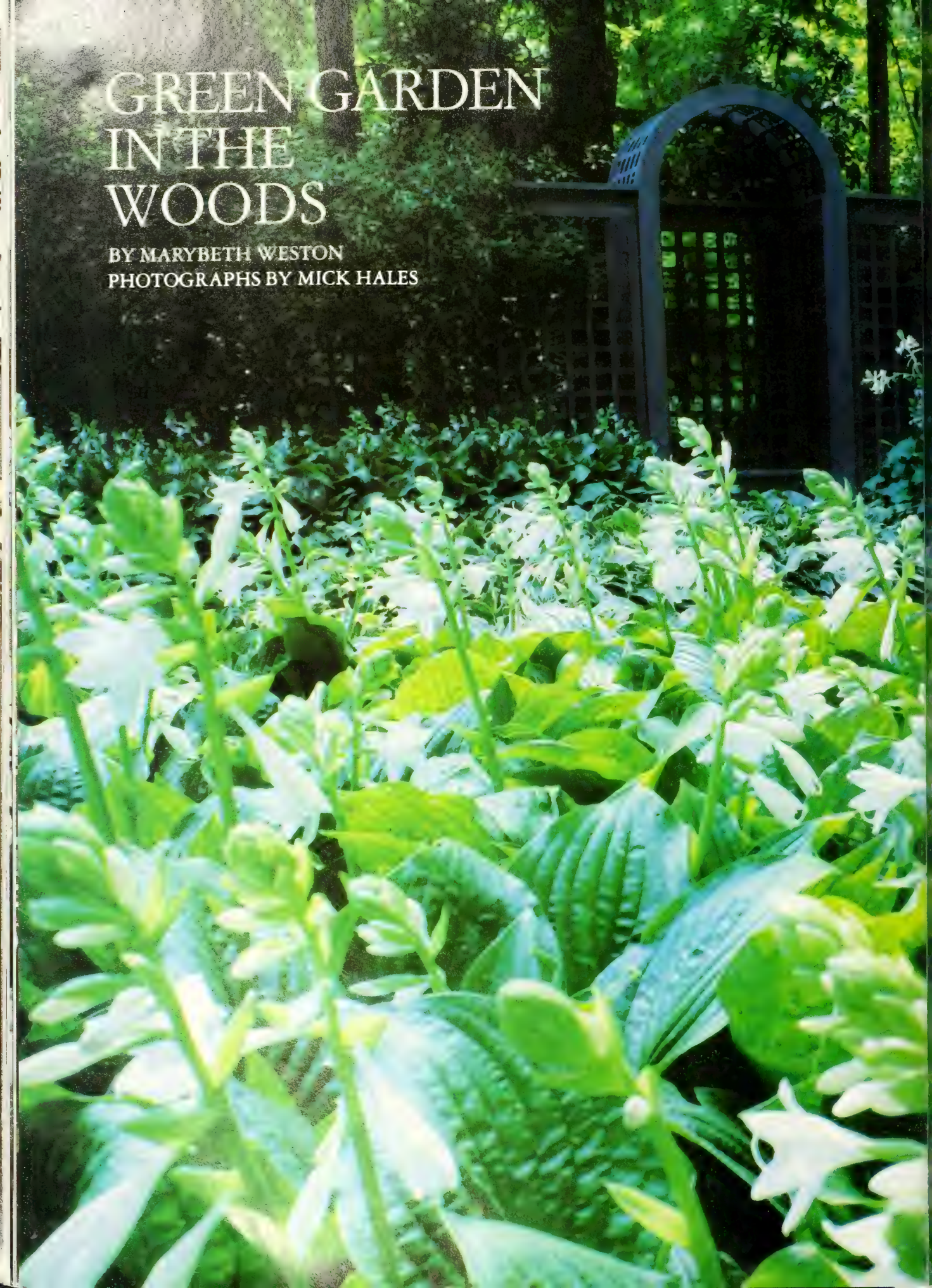




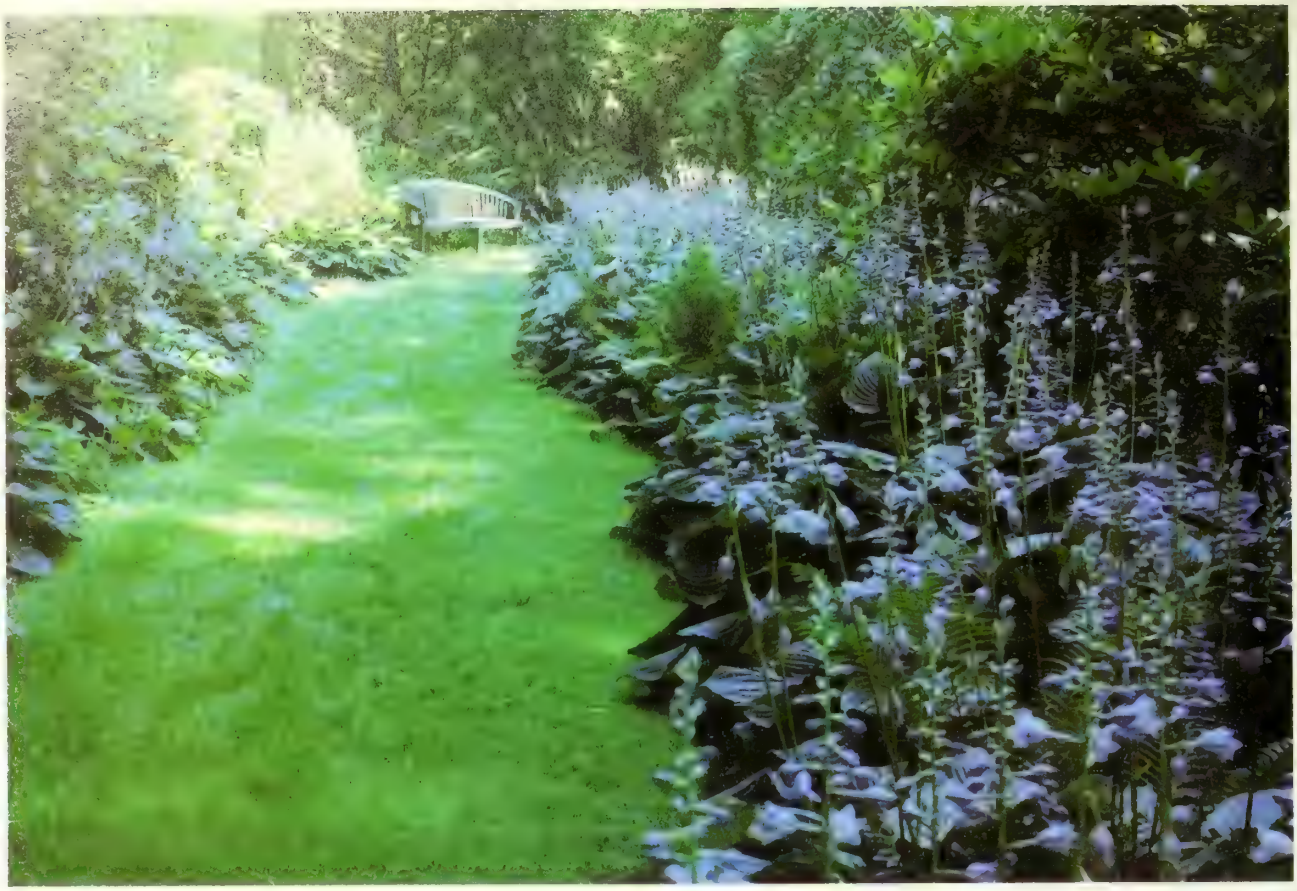
Opposite: Dining room in added space overlooking a new terrace has walls of wood blocks painted to resemble stone and a real marble floor. Chairs are English Regency, stools 19th-century French. Dinner is at 10 in this European household. *This page:* Seventy-foot swimming pool doubles as a reflecting pool.

GREEN GARDEN IN THE WOODS

BY MARYBETH WESTON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICK HALES







Preceding pages: Lattice fencing and archways enclose circular beds of hosta, beloved by 19th-century gardeners; cast-iron figure of woman with an urn is of the period and is ringed by a basin of water, attractive to birds and frogs.

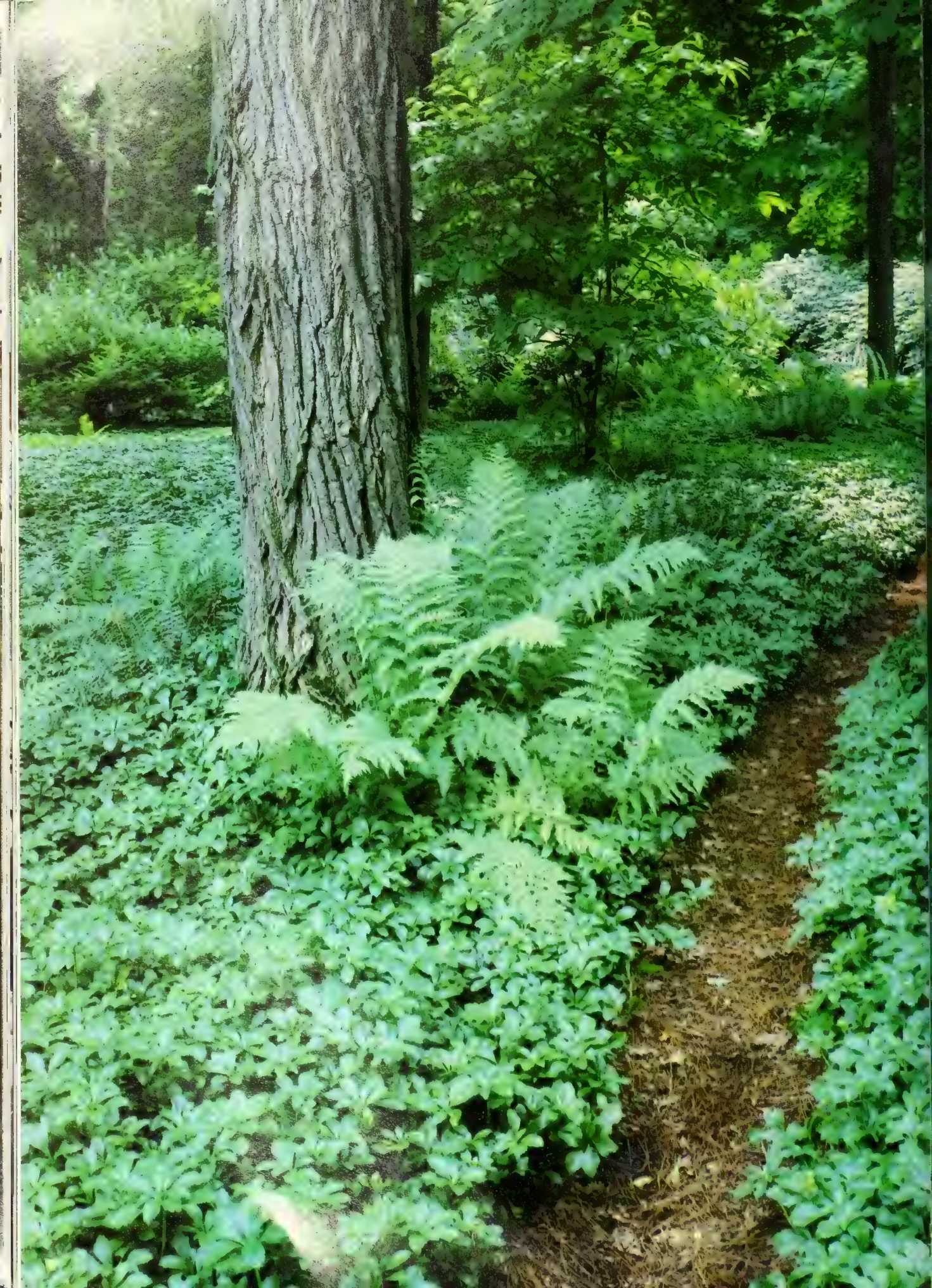
"I have a passion for old-fashioned gardens," says Mrs. Samuel Reed. "About eight years ago I began reading books by Gertrude Jekyll, V. Sackville-West, and other English gardeners who tell you about green rooms surrounded by magnificent yews or what to do with a wonderful 20-foot stone enclosure. I read about Banksia roses, though they can't take our winters, and sweet peas that would melt in our summer heat. I dreamed of secret gardens." Mrs. Reed sighs. "What really happens here is that we're living on a wet slope with nothing but shade, acid soil, and hardpan. We have three children and three terriers, and a white English setter who delights in laying out paths, a different one every day. Possibly the New Jersey Turnpike through the woods is what he has in mind. I brought in yews to enclose the swimming pool we built, but the deer wanted to take them out, and did. Given our weather and terrain and my temperament—I'm too impatient—there was no way we could have the classic English gardens I dreamed of. And so I have had to be very Yankee about the whole thing." In some places the Reeds have had fences built, fences the deer can't eat or leap. Mr. Reed has helped thin the woods, to highlight the best trees. Mrs. Reed has hacked away at vines and underbrush to make woodland paths that lead to "my idea of green rooms." Here, benches or ornaments are half-hidden in semicircles of ferns, flowering shrubs, or weeping tre that give a sense of mystery in a simple and natural wa "Weeping forms are so Victorian. You don't see them ofte and I like bizarre things," Mrs. Reed explains, pointing o weeping beech and birch trees and Sargent's hemlocks s has added to the area's maples, oaks, and pines. Where s sifts through the high shade, she has squeezed in other tre that interest her: cedar of Lebanon, catalpa, cucumber ma nolia, copper beech, Franklinia, Stewartia, oxydendro metasequoia. "There are a few things I don't want to gro mostly annuals. Everything else I long for." Wildflowers a a particular passion—trillium, May-apple, Solomon's se Dutchman's-breeches, columbine, and great clumps snakeroot (*Cimicifuga racemosa*), whose white spires bloo in summer along with pink spires of cultivated astilbe.

"The previous owner was a splendid gardener," M Reed says. "She planted a white azalea garden and huge rh dodendrons, mostly white and palest palest pink, and gathering of lilacs we're adding to. Our hosta garden w originally her floribunda rose garden with a circular sto path and a small basin, planted before there was such a can py of trees. I try to keep away from sprays, so I took out t floribundas and planted hosta, mostly blue-green *Hosta S boldiana elegans,* and some with a variegated rim." The ne



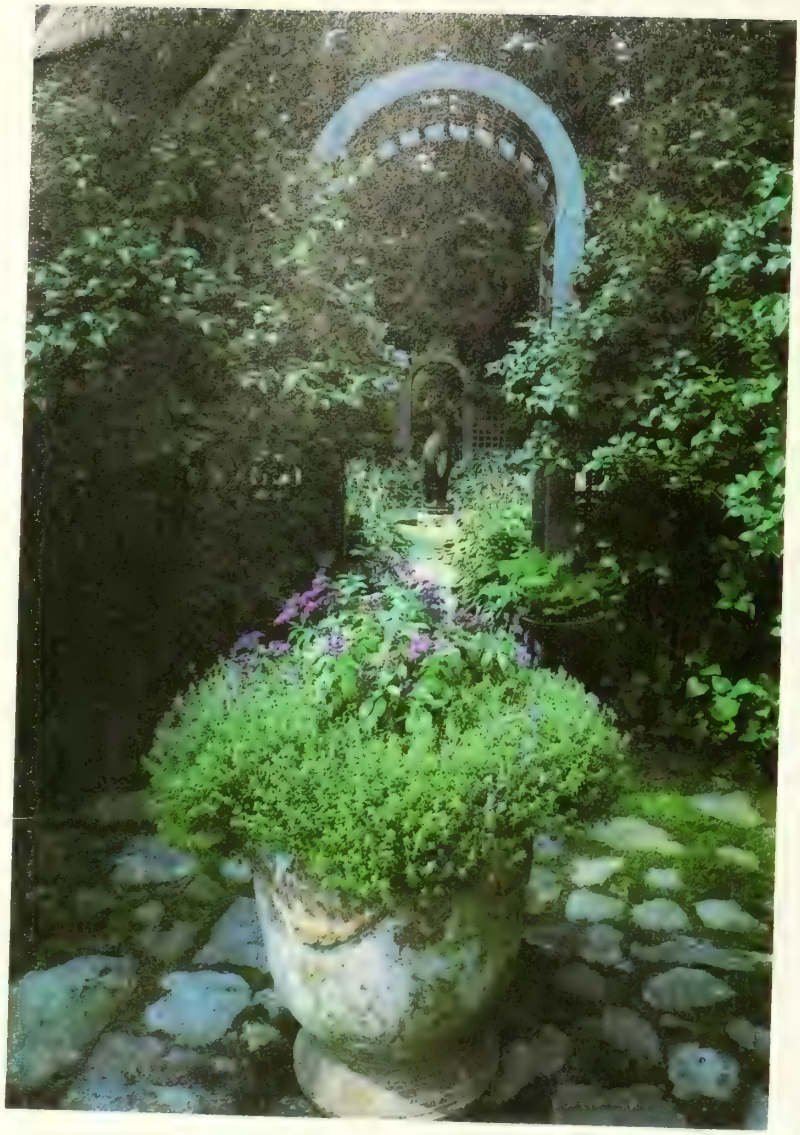
Opposite and above: Paths of grass or stone lead through the woodland to a bench or an obelisk tucked among hosta, ferns, and a welter of wildflowers and perennials. White spires of snakeroot and astilbe add light and airiness.

elliswork fence, enclosing an area roughly 55 by 52 feet, as inspired by one Mrs. Reed's family had in Maine. The ood is protected with a slaty blue-green stain, as change- ɔle in the light as the sea. In June the hostas have lavender ıd white blossoms, repeating the colors of the wisteria that ıshes the Reeds' white house and climbs the sturdy fence, ıd the colors of the nearby lilacs, also white and lavender, ɔlus an old-lady mauve, which I love." Mrs. Reed under- lanted the lilacs with grape hyacinths. Even the potted ɔwers of summer carry out this color theme. The house ter- ıce has tubs of lavender-blue agapanthus, and the swim- ing pool has white agapanthus in harmony with its spindle ıcket fence that replaced the yews the deer ate. Her sensi- vity to color is apparent not only in what Mrs. Reed does, ıt in what she does not do. She did not make the narrow vimming pool the usual aquamarine. "If you're near the ːa or where light is bright, an aquamarine pool can be pret- ; if you're living in a green forest as we are, it can be jarring. dark color works better." But to vary "the overpowering ark green of the woods," she has not only placed white ːrches and benches, urns and towers here and there, but as planted groundcovers with attractive foliage and white pastel flowers in spring. Fragrant sweet woodruff is a fa- ɔrite, and there are patches of myrtle, bearberry, ajuga, epimidium, lamium, pachysandra. "I wish I could find a substitute for pachysandra. It's boring, but my goal is no weeding. I have weeded till 9:30 on summer evenings—the children thought I should be certified. A shade garden is supposed to be less work than others, but I don't think a garden exists that isn't labor-intensive. I do it with a man who helps me, and with the guidance of friends." The 18th-century Diana, by the pool, came from the garden of the grandmother of one of her best friends. Jacquelin T. Robertson was the architect for the pool house. Albert Hadley gave her the obelisk. Elinor Merrell found the 19th-century statue and urns. "And Powers Taylor's Rosedale Nursery put in everything, except when I got unfaithful and ordered from catalogues I couldn't resist—especially Royall Bemis's Blackthorn Gardens in Massachusetts for ferns, wildflowers, clematis, and perennials, and Roses of Yesterday and Today in California for old roses with beautiful names like Mme. Hardy and Thigh of Nymph. I owe a lot to my friends, and to my husband for his patience. You see, he likes everything neat, with vistas—Capability Brown and Repton at their best—and I like things to look like *Green Mansions.*" □ *Marybeth Weston, former garden editor of House & Garden, is a trustee of Lady Bird Johnson's National Wildflower Research Center.*





Fountains of ferns—ostrich, maidenhair, lady, and more—planted among pachysandra and other groundcovers replace briers and poison ivy in this remodeled woodland. Soft to the foot, the path is paved with weed-inhibiting black plastic piled thick with dry pine needles.



Right Spindle fence, clematis, and roses surround swimming pool. *Above* A *pot d'Anduze* planted with heliotrope and thyme. *Below:* Terrace framed by wisteria, climbing hydrangea, ferns.






The Magical House That Soane Bui



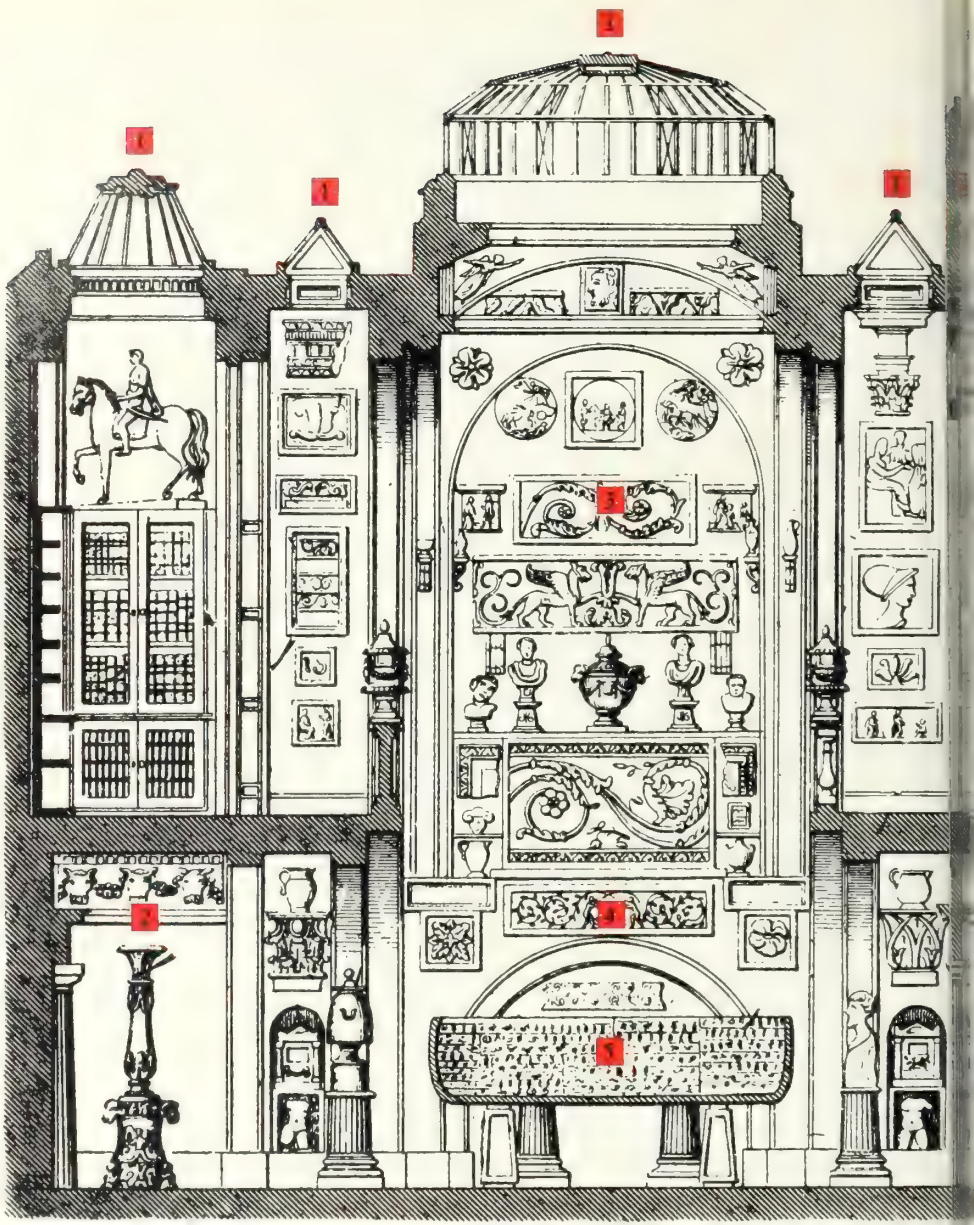
BY MARTIN FILLER

PHOTOGRAPHS
BY RICHARD BRYANT



COURTESY SIR JOHN SOANE'S MUSEUM

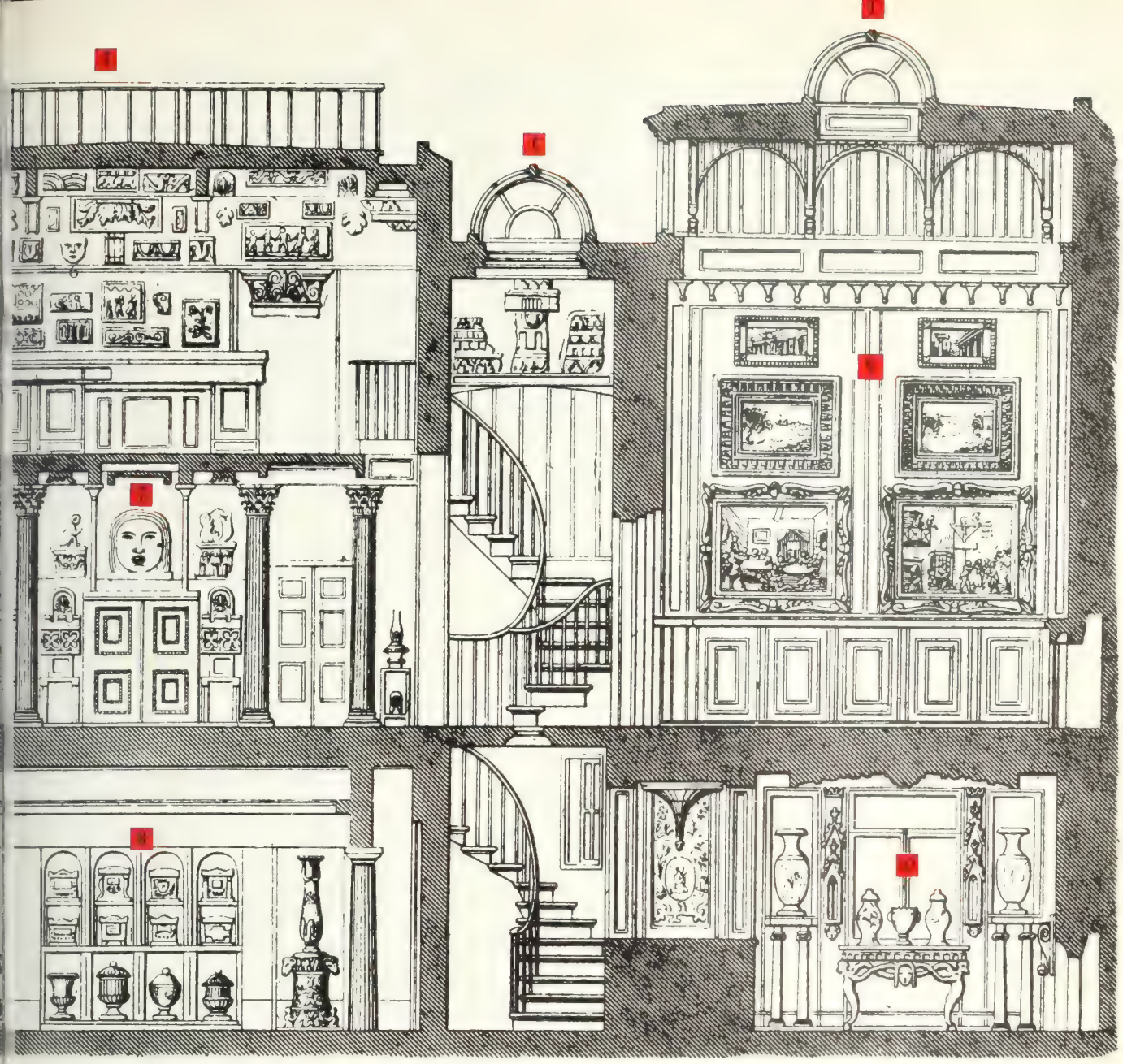
Above: Sir John Soane (1753–1837) at the age of 75 in a portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence. *Preceding pages, left:* Soane's house at 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields in London was built to his designs between 1812 and 1814. Its projecting Portland stone façade is flanked by two town houses Soane also owned; all three buildings form the Soane Museum. *Preceding pages, right:* The Breakfast Parlour is reflected in a convex mirror on one of the pendentives of its canopied ceiling.



Above: Cross section through the interconnecting rear portions of Sir John Soane's Museum, at 12, 13, and 14 Lincoln's Inn Fields.

1. Skylights: Soane's extensive use of natural overhead lighting allowed him to achieve dramatic effects in the days before electrical illumination.
2. The West Chamber
3. The Dome: See pages 168 and 172.
4. The Sepulchral Chamber
5. The Sarcophagus of Seti I Limestone coffin of Egyptian pharoah.

The early years of the 19th century in England saw artistic eccentricity rise to genius three times. William Blake had his "lunatic" hallucinatory visions of the spirit world, now treasured in his poems, watercolors, and engravings as one of the most vivid testimonies of the mystic experience in Western culture. J.M.W. Turner evoked atmosphere and light with what some of his contemporaries thought the smearings of a madman, and announced the advent of abstract art. And then there was Sir John Soane, the architect who created works of prophetic modernity, predicting the radical rethinking of architecture that transformed the built environment within a century of his death. His significance, like that of those two other artistic pioneers, could be judged only with historical distance. Derided in his own time as a destroyer of the old architectural order (he was tagged "the Modern Goth"), Soane is now honored as a founder of a new order that has yet to reach fulfillment. He pointed the way toward an architecture in which tradition and innova-



The Students' Room: . repository of casts and rchitectural models.

7. The Colonnade: Soane originally stored his collection of 8,800 Adam drawings here. In niche at left is a copy of the famous Diana of Ephesus.

8. The Crypt: Among Classical fragments and casts are memorial tablets to Soane's wife and son.

9. The Picture Room: On display are two series by Hogarth, *The Rake's Progress* and *The Election.* See page 167.

10. The Monk's Parlour: Part of Soane's mock-Gothic "monastic" suite. Table is in the style of William Kent.

on can coexist and flourish, with the enriching effect of an- ient values imbued with contemporary meaning.

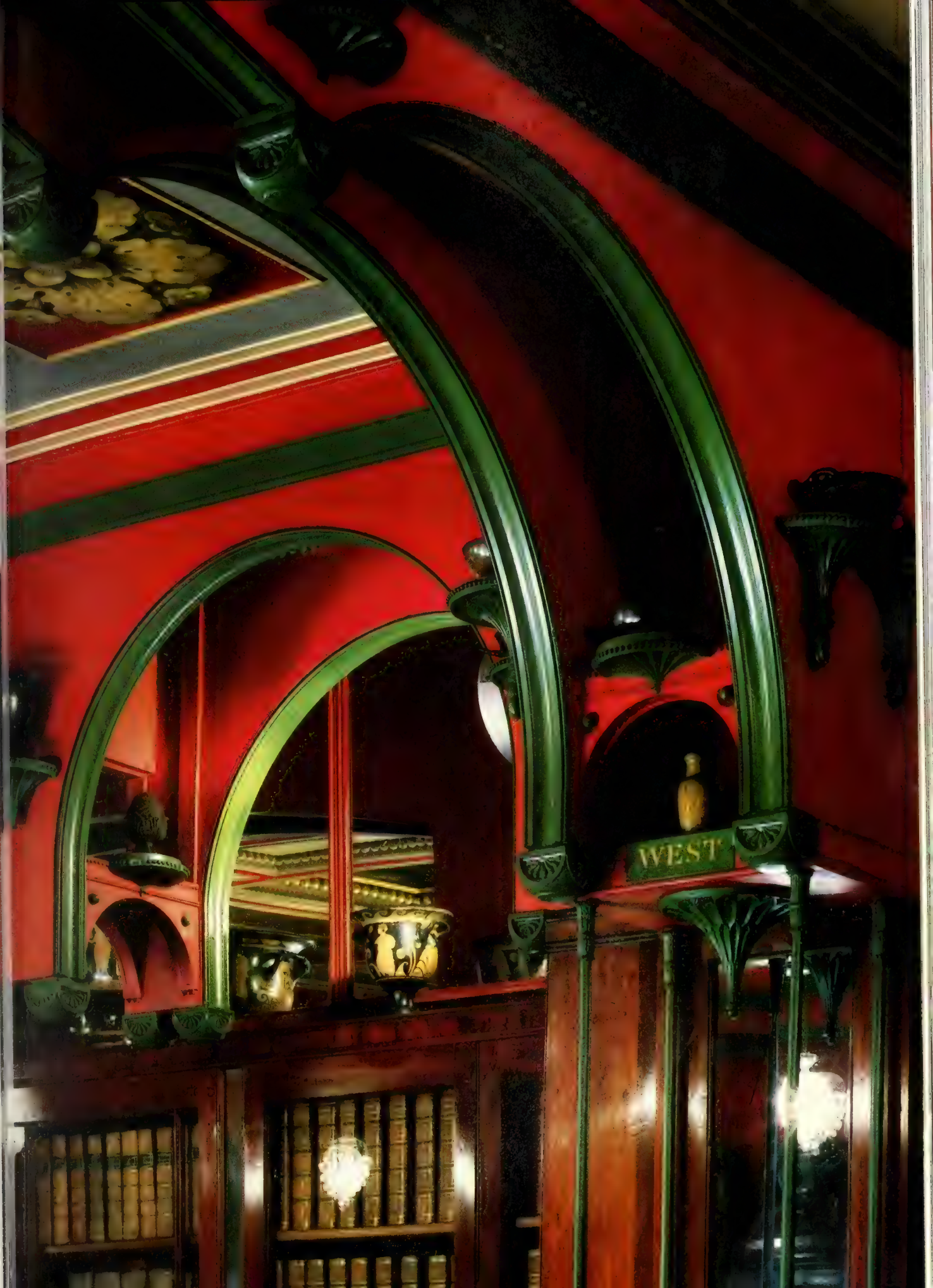
None of those three inspired artists ever produced a more eeply personal document of his art and life than the house ohn Soane built for himself between 1812 and 1814 at 13 incoln's Inn Fields in London, now Sir John Soane's Muse- m. Like the works of Turner and Blake, this architecture peaks to us with a compelling immediacy, collapsing more han a century and a half into a timeless instant. The many contemporary architects who are now attempting to re-establish the Classical tradition could have no better study than Sir John Soane's house. He took the Neoclassical style as far as it could go and then went beyond it; he retained the essence of its form but discarded its superficial ornament, for he knew that only new means of expression could give the Classical vocabulary relevance once again. This remarkable building gives proof that in architecture the proper pursuit of the past must also lead to the future.



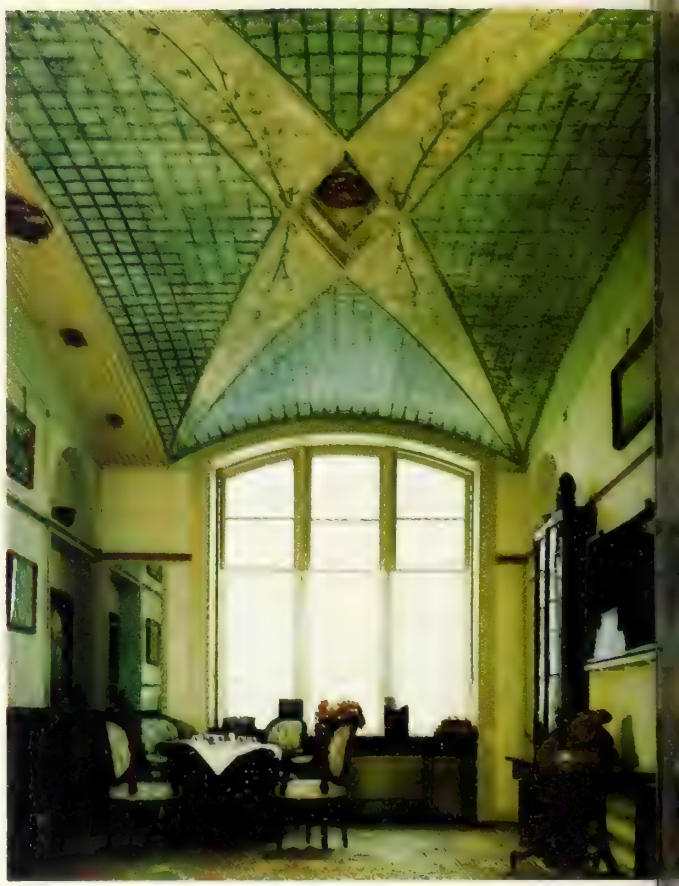
Opposite: Detail of the canopy of segmental arches separating the Dining Room and Library displays Soane's rich sculptural sense. Niches above the bookcases are mirrored. *Above:* The Library, as seen from the Dining Room; the two rooms open onto each other to form one large space. A Pompeiian red scheme predominates, with trim in complementary green giving extra vibrancy to the red. The ceiling was painted in 1834 by Henry Holland with scenes depicting Phoebus in his celestial chariot.

If the line between genius and madness is a thin one, then it was not always easy to tell on which side John Soane stood. As former Soane Museum curator Arthur Bolton once wrote, "He was never a clear thinker; on the contrary, he is given to flashes, often strangely phrased, which burst forth through an ultra dry form of expression. . . .It is easy to understand, therefore, that the attitude of his contemporaries was one of bewilderment, not unmixed with ridicule." Soane's friends tried to chide him out of his more delusive notions, which they tactfully referred to as "your fancies." Although a thoroughly conscientious and dependable professional, personally he was emotional, intolerant, and plagued by a highly developed persecution complex. (It was not wholly unjustified; like many paranoids, he had real enemies along with his imaginary ones.) There is no doubt that his was a classic obsessive-compulsive personality, and his overloaded, convoluted house is a virtual psychological roadmap of his mind.

For all its power and freshness, Soane's work, and particularly his own house, possessed stylistic mannerisms that paralleled those of his quirky personality. One of Soane's most pronounced traits was what Bolton described as "that craving for sympathy that is at once a source of strength and weakness in the artist." A duality is evident in many of his


WEST



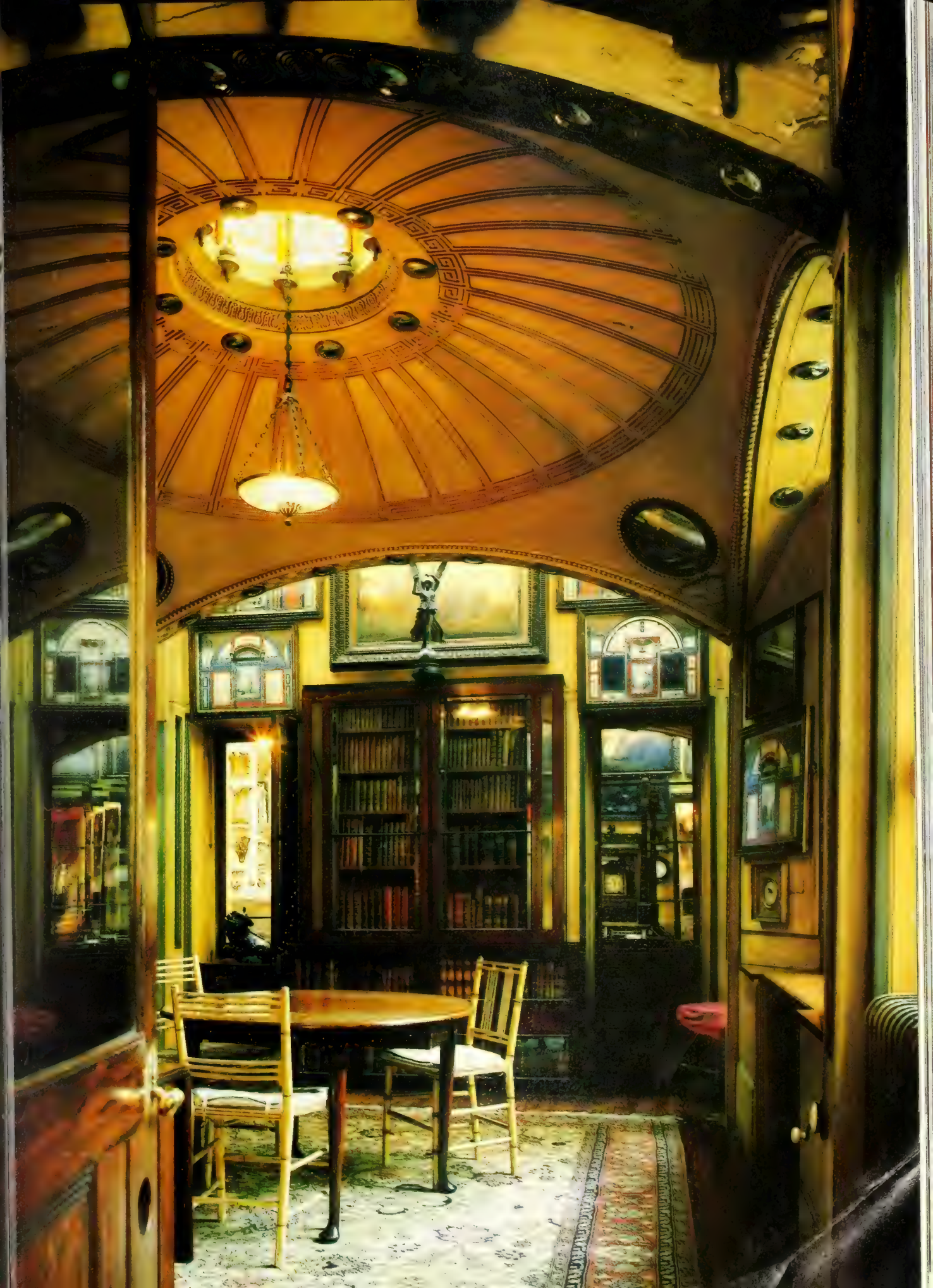


Opposite: The Breakfast Parlour is a masterpiece of architectural illusion that makes the small, awkwardly positioned space seem far larger than it really is. The suspended "handkerchief" canopy is illuminated by an octangular painted-glass lantern light. *Above left:* The North Drawing Room contains drawings and models of projects by Soane. Over the fireplace is Watteau's *L'Accordée du Village*. *Above right:* The vaulted ceiling of the Breakfast Room of 12 Lincoln's Inn Fields, the original Soane house, is painted with the architect's trellis, honeysuckle, and columbine design.

designs, but apparently Soane was not troubled by it (unlike Gustav Mahler, who underwent psychoanalysis with Freud because his moments of greatest inspiration while composing were interrupted by distracting memories of peasant ditties). As Sir John Summerson, the great architectural historian and present curator of the Soane Museum, has written, ". . . his highest flights are always accompanied by childish odds and ends which it is quite impossible to take seriously. . . . These catch the attention and detain it from appreciation of the larger originalities in the control of space and light. It was easy to mock these mantelpiece mannerisms and the greatness of Soane was felt by few."

Soane was one of the few. From childhood he was propelled by a driving ambition that was only barely exceeded by his talent. Born the son of a rural bricklayer in Berkshire in 1753, he was recognized at an early age for his obvious aptitude. At the age of 15, he was apprenticed to a London architect and came to the attention of the powerful Sir William Chambers—the Philip Johnson of his day—who introduced the fledgling architect to King George III. Shortly thereafter the poor but talented (as well as handsome and socially adaptable) young man won a fellowship for the obligatory Grand Tour and upon his return to London set up independent practice. He added a final "e" to his surname (he had been christened John Soan) to make it seem more distinguished and married Elizabeth Smith, the niece of a prosperous builder and real-estate speculator. In a few years her rich uncle died and left her an inheritance that allowed Soane to write, "My income was so much increased as to render me independent of professional emoluments." But professional emoluments aplenty began to come in, especially after 1788, when Soane assumed the prestigious position of architect of the Bank of England. His 12-hour workdays and his considerable accounting skills helped increase his fortune even further.

A person's home is one of the most revealing indications of self-image and social standing, especially among architects, and truer still in a highly stratified society. Thus, in keeping with his rising status, John Soane built a fine town house at 12 Lincoln's Inn Fields in London in 1792 and eight years later acquired Pitzhanger Manor, a country seat in Ealing, six miles from Hyde Park Corner. He began collecting art and antiquities, with an eye toward the aesthetic education of his two sons, John Jr. and George (whom he hoped would follow in his professional footsteps), and made Pitzhanger into a kind of domestic museum for their cultural edification. That neither of them showed any interest whatsoever in architecture was a *(Text continued on page 170)*





This page: Soane's ingenious system of hinged panels in the Picture Room allowed him to hang six times the number of paintings he could have displayed conventionally in the 12-by-13-foot space. *Opposite:* Beneath the Picture Room's 19-foot-high ceiling, elaborately plastered with Gothic motifs, the eight canvases of William Hogarth's satirical series *The Rake's Progress* (1732–33) depict the downfall of Tom Rakewell. Mrs. Soane bought them in 1802 for £570.





Right: The Dome, a 30-foot-high rotunda encompassing three stories, is the most dramatic interior feature of the Soane Museum. At the ground-floor level, a faceted vitrine protects the limestone sarcophagus of Seti I, Pharaoh of Egypt. On balustrade at center is a bust of Soane by Sir Francis Chantrey. Flanking its base are statuettes of Michelangelo (left) and Raphael (right) by John Flaxman. Above bust of Soane, in red-backed niche, is a bust of Sir Thomas Lawrence. *Opposite:* In the Corridor, leading to the stairway to the Student's Room, a guard sits impassively amid casts and ancient fragments. The floor of translucent glass blocks admits light into the ...nk's Parlour be... ...r and is an unu...ually early residential use of that material.



(Continued from page 164) bitter disappointment for Soane, and he eventually sold that house and had his growing collection moved to London.

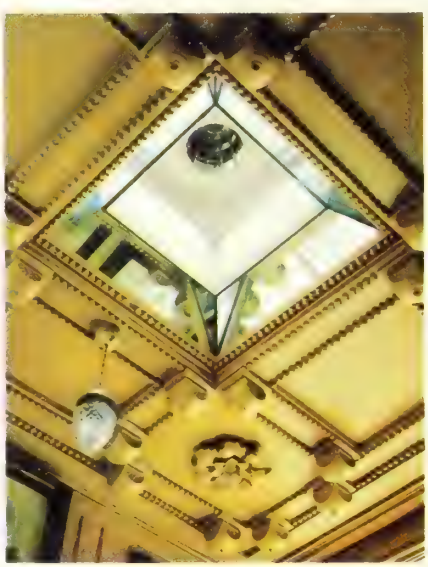
His vast assortment of objects included plaster casts of Classical statuary, Greek vases, ancient fragments (such as a sculpture from the Erechtheum on the Acropolis), bits and pieces of Gothic architectural details, paintings by Watteau, Canaletto, Hogarth, Fuseli, and Turner, architectural drawings by Piranesi, Clérisseau, and the brothers Adam, sculpture by Pierino da Vinci, Canova, and Flaxman, books (eventually totaling 7,783 volumes, about half of which dealt with art and architecture), and miscellaneous curiosities ranging from fabulous rarities to meretricious fakes. To house them Soane bought 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, the building next door to his home at No. 12, and in 1812 he began to remodel No. 13 into the structure that has been a source of wonder to architects and laymen ever since.

Although the protruding Portland stone façade of No. 13 immediately sets it apart from its brick-fronted neighbors, the exterior still gives little indication of the spaces Soane created inside it. Charles Moore, the contemporary architect whose work has been most influenced by Soane, once wrote of Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli as "a whole world in a circle and a square." The same might be said of Sir John Soane's house, which condenses a spatial sequence no less staggering than that at Tivoli into an area less than 90 feet wide, 90 feet deep, and 30 feet high. The variety and profundity of architectural experience that Soane crammed into that amazingly small space is literally breathtaking.

None of this came cheaply for Soane. He worked on the complex of buildings (remodeling 14 Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1824) almost ceaselessly until his death a quarter of a century after beginning work on No. 13. No expense was too great for him to pursue a precise architectural effect or to buy a new coveted treasure. Fortunately, his income was equal to his cravings, unlike the resources of such similarly smitten artists as Rembrandt, who wound up in bankruptcy because of his addictive acquisitiveness.



Doorway of dressing room is surrounded by casts of ancient gem engravings.



RICHARD BRYANT

Coffer of dressing-room skylight is mirrored for greater illumination.

Soane's interior universe is entered through the arched doorway of No. 13, the façade of which is embellished with a typically Soanian mixture of Classical replicas (caryatids from the Porch of the Maidens of the Erechtheum) and Medieval fragments (brackets from a demolished portion of Westminster Hall). The entry hall leads to a curving, cantilevered stone stair, lit from above by a colored-glass skylight that introduces one of the house's major themes, a movement toward light that effects the illusion of infinite space transcending the actual boundaries of the relatively small structure.

The stairway brings the visitor to the *piano nobile* and three of the most remarkable rooms in the house. Two of them, the Library and the Dining Room, give onto one another and, as Soane himself wrote, "may be considered as one room." They share the same color scheme—Pompeiian red with complementary green borders that create a vibrant optical tension. That deeply saturated tonality is characteristic of the colors Soane favored over the typical white-and-gold interiors of the Regency period. Even more unusual is the strikingly sculptural feeling of those rooms, which seem to have been carved from a single block of some rich and rare material.

Soane achieved this effect by his elaborate articulation of both volume and surface. Deep recesses frame the arched windows and mirrored niches above the bookcases in the Library; long expanses of wall are broken down into ever-smaller components, and the two rooms are divided by a triple arched canopy hollowed out with suggestive voids. The coffered ceilings of both rooms are painted with Classical subjects, and the startling shifts in scale among the pictures, sculptures, decorative objects, and mirrors that crowd every available bit of wall space provide constant visual stimulation.

An even more brilliant display of Soane's architectural sleight-of-hand is the Breakfast Parlour, the room of the Soane house that moves architects the most. Perhaps it is because there are few more extraordinary examples of an architectural silk purse made from a spatial sow's ear. The Breakfast Parlour was created from an extremely unpromising residual area hemmed in on one side by a stairway, on another by the so-called Monument Court (actually no more than a largish air shaft), and on a third by the Dome, the three-story focus of Soane's sculpture collection. To give definition to this awkward spot, Soane covered the Breakfast *(Continued on page 172)*



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(Continued from page 170) Parlour with an ingenious suspended "handkerchief" canopy (free of the walls on two sides), the shallow interior of which he decorated with a trompe l'oeil ribbed motif to give it the feeling of a dome. The center of the canopy is pierced by an oculus lit by an octangular lantern light with glass panels painted with Biblical scenes. The oculus is ringed by eight small convex mirrors, which also line the soffits of the canopy's four arches. Larger convex mirrors are placed in each of the canopy's four pendentives, and together that galaxy of mirrors adds to a cumulative impression not unlike the view through the wrong end of a telescope.

Charles Moore defined the potent spell cast by the Breakfast Parlour when he observed in *The Place of Houses* how "the complex subdivisions overhead, made magic by the mirrors, along with the illusion of depth in the tiny pictures, contribute to this room seeming at once miniscule and cosmic. Soane's poignant exaltation of the almost trivial is peerless, beyond any hope of imitation." And Soane himself, obviously proud of his accomplishment, wrote that ". . . the variety of outline and general arrangement in the design and decoration of this space present a succession of those fanciful effects that constitute the poetry of architecture."

If the Breakfast Parlour is a sonnet, then much of the rest of the house is a Gothic novel. Soane's long life spanned both the Classical Revival during his youth and the Gothic Revival during his maturity, and his house reflects the influence of both. In opposition to the more straightforward architectural character of the residential portions of No. 13, Soane also devised a sequence of frankly theatrical spaces running along the interconnecting rear portions of the three adjacent buildings in which he was able to display his art objects as dramatically as possible.

The most impressive of those galleries is the Dome, a squared-off rotunda rising 30 feet above the ground floor and surmounted by a circular skylight. Here, with its plethora of busts, urns, medallions, statuettes, plaster casts,



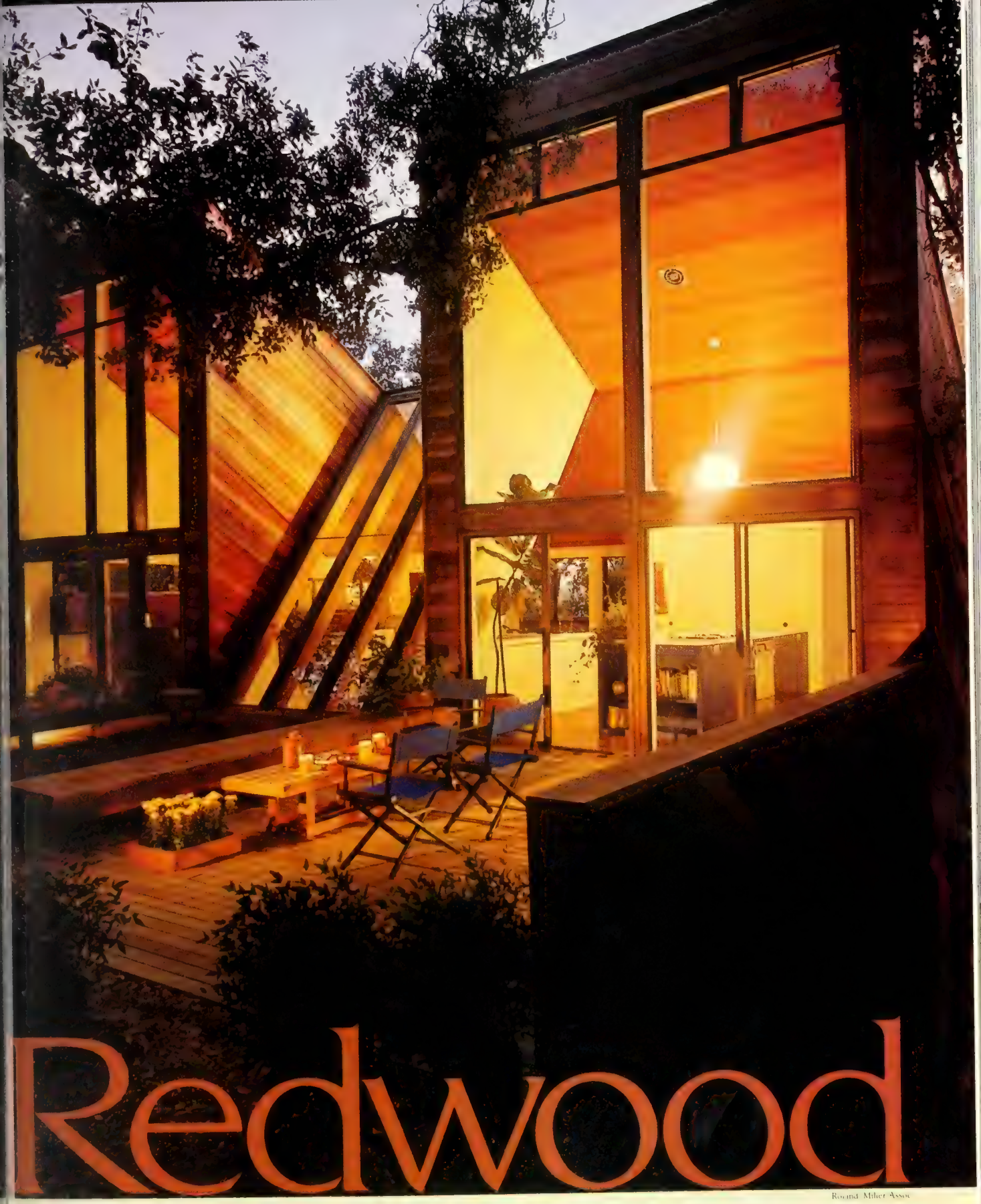
RICHARD BRYANT

A cast of the Apollo Belvedere surveys the Dome. Below it on the balustrade, a row of Roman cinerary urns.

and small carved-stone fragments of every description, Soane's pack-rat complex is claustrophobically clear. The Dome's greatest rarity, an object of limitless mystery for Soane's contemporaries, is still enshrined in the well of that space, which he portentously named the Sepulchral Chamber. The fabled focal object is the limestone sarcophagus of the Egyptian Pharaoh Seti I, which was discovered in the Necropolis at Thebes in 1815. The architect bought it in 1824 for £2,000 (about $60,000 in today's currency) after the British Museum found the purchase price too high. Soane celebrated his exotic acquisition with a three-day reception, at which fashionable London w suitably awed. One visitor, a Mrs. Ba bara Holland, wrote, "I confess th the place in which this wonderful mo ument of antiquity is situated becan the overpowering attraction."

Other thrills can be experienced the adjacent Catacombs (filled wi Roman cinerary urns and a typical Soanian mélange of Egyptian and R man antiquities), the Crypt (with m morial tablets to Soane's wife and son and, for a change of pace, the "mona tic" suite of chambers that include the Monk's Cell (now a storage room the Monk's Parlour, and the Monk Yard, with its "cloister" made fro Gothic arches that Soane salvage from the 13th-century House of Lor when it was torn down to make way f his new Royal Gallery in 1823. Th the visitor can move through sever millennia and enjoy the somewh spooky effects of make-believe inter ors that combine the surprises of a Di neyland funhouse with the surre juxtapositions of a Max Ernst collag But for all its nostalgia, the house is marvel of advanced architectur thinking. Soane's rich layering of spac both horizontally and vertically, ex pressive use of light, sophisticated in terpenetrations of volume, and use industrial materials all anticipate d velopments that are now part of th modern architectural canon.

Although assailed by contemporar critics for the liberties he took with th conventions of Classical architectur Soane outlived enough of his foes to b regarded at last as the dean of his pro fession. Knighted at the age of 80, h shepherded an act through Parliamen that accepted his home and museum a a gift to the nation, ensuring the prese vation of his most revealingly person architectural statement. Althoug many of his public buildings have sinc been destroyed or altered beyond re ognition, his house is ample testimon to his greatness. Sir John Soane died o January 20, 1837, five months to th day before Queen Victoria ascende the throne. It was one of history neater elisions, for Soane's passin closed one architectural era as much a the Victorian age opened another. □



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JOURNAL

IS IT LOVE AT SECOND SIGHT FOR THE BUILDING THEY LOVED TO HATE?

Although Johnson/Burgee's AT&T Building in New York is still unfinished (completion is now scheduled for spring 1984), apparently the 36-story, pink-granite tower is already a word-of-mouth, man-in-the-street success. Decried when the scheme was unveiled in 1978, the AT&T Building has now won many admirers for its painstakingly precise detailing and its unusual, pleasing color, which demonstrates how much that vital architectural quality has been missed in gray-on-gray Manhattan. Many, however, mourn the disappearance of the building's steel skeleton (seen below in Cervin Robinson's progress photos), which is actually composed of two structurally independent towers linked by spans above the 110-foot-high entry arch. The boldly defined frame of AT&T was for some observers a great deal more exciting than the well-mannered stone covering that now shrouds it, but this is not a design that adheres to the modernist dogma that a building ought to "honestly" express its inner structural nature on its surface.

The AT&T Building differs from its original renderings in unexpected ways. As Philip Johnson promised, its controversial split-pediment top is not visible from the street and can be viewed only from a distance. On the other hand, the glazing of the windows—mullionless sheets of black-tinted glass—has given them an eerily vacant feeling that even Johnson himself dislikes. But the biggest surprise of all is the rumor that AT&T might never occupy the building, a result of the federal anti-trust breakup of the corporation, which could make a central headquarters unnecessary. No doubt some firm eager to improve its image would snap it up if given the chance, thereby creating another historical parallel: In 1928 Walter Chrysler bought New York's unfinished Reynolds Building, modified the plans, completed it, and named it for himself. One major question about AT&T remains. Does its new constituency really love it, or is this just another case of New Yorkers' legendary ability to adapt to anything? □ *Martin Filler*

March 23, 1982



May 6, 1982





THE ROTHKO CASE AS TV DOCUDRAMA

Painters paint and dealers sell their work. Well, it's not always that clear-cut.

Before the American abstract painter Mark Rothko committed suicide in his studio in 1970, he made a provision that all his work be kept together under the auspices of a foundation to be run by three of his closest friends. To raise cash, the Rothko Foundation sold 100 paintings to Frank Lloyd of the Marlborough Gallery for $1.8 million. Later Lloyd sold 12 for $1 million.

The ensuing financial scandal is chronicled on American Playhouse's production of *The Rothko Conspiracy*, with flashbacks showing the arrangements purportedly made between Rothko, his family, and friends. On PBS, May 3. □ *Gabrielle Winkel*

Larry Hoodekoff as Rothko



RICH NEW HOARD OF U.S. DECORATIVE ARTS

A spectacular collection of American decorative arts an Orientalia from the years





Top: The *Lusitania* in reverse-painted glass. *Above:* Peach-blow glass vase, ca. 1886.

1820 to 1930 is now housed in the new Margaret Woodbury Strong Museum in Rochester, New York. Some 200,000 objects—ranging from Victorian furniture to teddy bears, Tiffany glass to trade cards—make this treasure trove an unparalleled picture of daily American life in the wake of the Industrial Revolution.



GIANFRANCO GORGONI

FAFF'S STUPENDOUS
NTERIOR SCULPTURE

nvironmental art is hardly a
ew idea: For centuries
ainters and sculptors have
een intrigued with the
oncept of creating art that
nvelops the viewer,
reaking down the emotional and physical distance between a work of art and its viewers. A dazzling new installation by Judy Pfaff—the young artist who has made a considerable reputation of late with her mixed-media extravaganzas—was recently on view at New York's Holly Solomon Gallery and showed how far that concept has been taken. Entitled *3-D,* the piece occupied an entire room 22 feet wide, 35 feet long, and 13 feet high, into which one could enter and move through a vivid tangle of wire mesh, plastic, balsa wood, corrugated metal, and tree branches (among other materials) orchestrated into a wildly agitated but nevertheless harmonious composition. Falling somewhere between a walk-in Kandinsky and a New Wave hallucination, *3-D* gave a jolt of rich visual and spatial stimulation that much of today's new art promises but rarely delivers. □ *M.F.*

June 2, 1982 October 22, 1982 January 13, 1983







THE DECOROUS DELIGHTS OF ENGLISH FURNITURE

The resurgence of interest in furniture designed by architects has focused new attention on the history of the subject. One handsome new addition to the literature is Jill Lever's *Architects' Designs for Furniture* (Rizzoli, $25; $15 paper), a beautiful selection of 170 drawings from the collection of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

The works include a vigorous Baroque console table by William Kent, a romantically beplumed and



Clock case by C.F.A. Voysey, 1895.

canopied 18th-century double chaise longue by John Vardy, and a brilliantly polychromed Victorian sideboard by William Burges. Even more fascinating are the chair designs of the Edwardian architect Sir Edwin Lutyens, with their characteristic mix of tradition and playfulness. Now a cult figure among the Post Modernists, Lutyens could carry off oddball inventiveness with flawless aplomb. This is the England beyond Chippendale, Sheraton, and Hepplewhite. □ *M.F.*



MARIE CLAIRE/MARTIN DODEMAN

FOR EASTER ISLAND'S IDOLS, THE EYES NOW HAVE IT

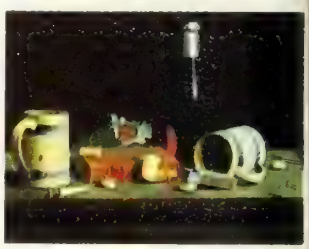
The famous stone idols—or *moai*—of Easter Island are now sporting a startling new look. Sergio Rapu, curator of the island's museum, recently discovered white coral fragments near the 15-to-30-foot-high figures and determined them to be part of long lost "eyes." Now they have been reproduced (with black obsidian "irises") and give the statues the gaze their makers in the 6th century A.D. intended. But what if they also wore grass skirts? *M.F.*

AMERICA'S MASTER OF TROMPE L'OEIL MAGIC

Important Information Inside: The Still Life Paintings of John F. Peto. *National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., through May 30. Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, July 15–Sept. 18.*

John Frederick Peto made two decisions about his life and work that in retrospect seem calculated to consign him to obscurity. Born in 1854 in Philadelphia, then the capital of American art, Peto chose as an adult to live outside the mainstream, in the tiny resort town of Island Heights, New Jersey. This move away from the center of the art community took Peto beyond the reach of most dealers and critics, so little was ever written about his work during his lifetime and few paintings sold. What recognition Peto did receive was due to the similarities his work shared with that of his former classmate at The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, William Harnett. Regarded as the premier practitioner of late-19th-century trompe l'oeil painting, Harnett was admired by his contemporaries and later by historians for the technical finesse with which his art mimicked reality. Peto, in deciding to create the same type of still life as his more famous colleague, was inevitably courting comparisons. Unfortunately for Peto, however, those aspects of his art that provide interest today and, no doubt, provoked curator John Wilmerding to mount this first exhibition in 30 years devoted exclusively to the painter's work are just those traits that can make his art seem a poor second to Harnett. Where the better-known artist favored sharp-focus images of elegant bric-a-brac, evenly lit, brightly colored, shamelessly positive in their celebration of materialism, Peto was attracted to moodier renderings of items that bore the wear and tear of daily use. To the casual observer, and especially to Americans, who tend to have a disproportionate respect for manual facility, Peto's work might just have seemed messy, often tentative, and





Top: Toms River, 1905. *Above: Mugs, Bottle, and Pipe,* 1890.

altogether less skilled. With hindsight, and the considered presentation offered by Wilmerding, visitors to this show will see Peto's efforts with new understanding.

The years following the Civil War were described by Henry James as an era when Americans saw "the world . . . [as] a more complicated place than it had hitherto seemed, the future more treacherous. . . ." It also was a period that produced great private fortunes and a public fascination with objects and property exemplified by the

Continued on page 178



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overstuffed, cluttered interiors favored in that day. Peto's work, in the innocent form of a depiction of ordinary items, is both a reflection of and commentary on these times. His pipes, striped mugs, candlesticks, books, and musical instruments are not simple copies, but are invested with emotions that convey the melancholy and uncertainty of postwar America. Tension is expressed not only in color and in Peto's eccentric placement of shadows, but also in his preference for asymmetrical composition and the massing of many forms, as well as his stress on the diagonal. The overall look of the paintings is deceptively casual and cluttered, but a second glance reveals an immediacy, a directness of feeling that is surprising in a picture of such straightforward subject matter. This effect is also enhanced by the strongly textured surfaces of the paintings, which are partially a result of the vibrancy of Peto's brushwork. The artist clearly was making no effort to conceal his presence or to actually simulate the real thing.

Peto's involvement with the purely formal components of his craft—line, color, form, space—is over the course of his career a growing concern—something the scope of this exhibit makes clear. By the time the chronology of his life reaches the late 1880s, the viewer can see Peto applying his interest in these painterly elements to the most abstract format a realist can devise—his pictures of letter racks. A two-dimensional subject holding two-dimensional items—money, letters, business cards, photos, envelopes—this series of pictures is a charmingly anecdotal but nonetheless serious exploration of the canvas's inherent flatness. It is here that his difference from Harnett and other still-life painters of his generation becomes apparent. Peto was not concerned with tricking the eye, and so it appears he was banished to history's second tier of artists for failing to attain a goal he never aspired to. By making his intentions and aspirations clear for the first time, this exhibition places Peto's work in the proper light. □ *Mary Ann Tighe*

LOSEY REELS IN A WINNING "TROUT"



Isabelle Huppert in *The Trout*

The American film director Joseph Losey has had a most curious career. Born in La Crosse, Wisconsin, in 1909, Losey worked as a newspaper reviewer, a production manager at the old Roxy Theater in New York, and a theater director (he staged Odets's *Waiting for Lefty* in Moscow) before getting to Hollywood and the cinema after the war. His early melodramas—*The Boy With Green Hair* and *M*—are strange and ambitious "B" movies that won him a cult reputation. But before moving on to major Hollywood productions, Losey ran afoul of McCarthyism. Blacklisted and thus unable to work in America, he went into exile in England and gradually emerged in the '60s as a major "European" director. In such films as *The Servant* (1963) and *Accident* (1967), both based on screenplays by Harold Pinter, Losey merged loathing of the upper classes with a startling erotophobia, producing an atmosphere of floating ominousness that some took as an attack on decadence (more skeptical viewers noted Losey's fatal attraction to it). However much he may have hated his characters, Losey gave them an undeniable chic that revealed more about his true feelings than did the disapproving attitudes on the surface of the films.

And the same is true of his baffling, perverse, but quite glamorous new movie, *The Trout,* starring Isabelle Huppert, Jeanne Moreau, Jean-Pierre Cassel, and Daniel Olbrychski. Adapting a well-known novel by Roger Vailland, Losey again uses upper-class characters—in this case, jet-setting executives of multinational corporations and their wives and mistresses—and again he finds them corrupt, weak, and destructive. Against this group he counterposes a proud, distant, asexual girl, Frédérique (Isabelle Huppert). In flashbacks we see Frédérique's youth at a trout fishery in the Jura mountains. Plagued by an elderly friend of her father's who gropes at her body—a classic dirty old man—Frédérique vows, as a girl, "to get things out of men without giving them anything." Ten years later she is still operating on that principle. Married to an alcoholic homosexual whom she is determined not to betray, Frédérique draws other men toward he and then spurns them. She's not a tease, exactly; she's a willful girl, sexually indifferent, and the film is devoted to her mystique—what she does is right simply because she does it.

Losey remains unconcerned with motivation, psychology, causality—the ordinary glue of most narrative movies. His characters act in a casual, arbitrary way that reflects their wealth and power but also, I imagine, Losey's feelings about dramatic form. He doesn't like his situations to sharply defined, or his dramatic values laid out in neat oppositions. *The Trout* is about the way an entire circle of people reveal their basest impulses and then destroy themselves in an attempt to dominate Frédérique. It's about sex as a power game but it's a game whose rules are so flexible and whose players so refined and elusive that the movie avoids most of the clichés of such stories; it also avoi a satisfying resolution—but that is the weakness of Losey's method, which emphasizes ambiance, moo portents.

Yet, as we're trying to puzzle out what *The Trout* means, we can enjoy the great beauty of the film. Working in the Juras and also in Japan, the great cinematographer Henri Alekan has produced a ver dry, precise French color palette, and Losey shoots t movie in long-lasting "takes" in which the came follows the characters—Frédérique especially—through some extraordinarily complicated physical movements without a cut. The sustaine beauty of these shots creates a powerful tension

Continued on page 1

BRAQUE



"La Femme au Livre", 1945. $51\frac{3}{8}$" x $38\frac{1}{4}$".
Oil on canvas. (130 x 97 cm.)

DEGAS



"Two Dancers", 1890. $27\frac{7}{16}$" x $21\frac{1}{4}$"
Pastel. (69 x 54 cm.)

HEADE



"Hummingbird Perched on an Orchid Plant", 1901.
Oil on canvas. $20\frac{1}{4}$" x $15\frac{1}{4}$". (51 x 39 cm.)

O'KEEFFE

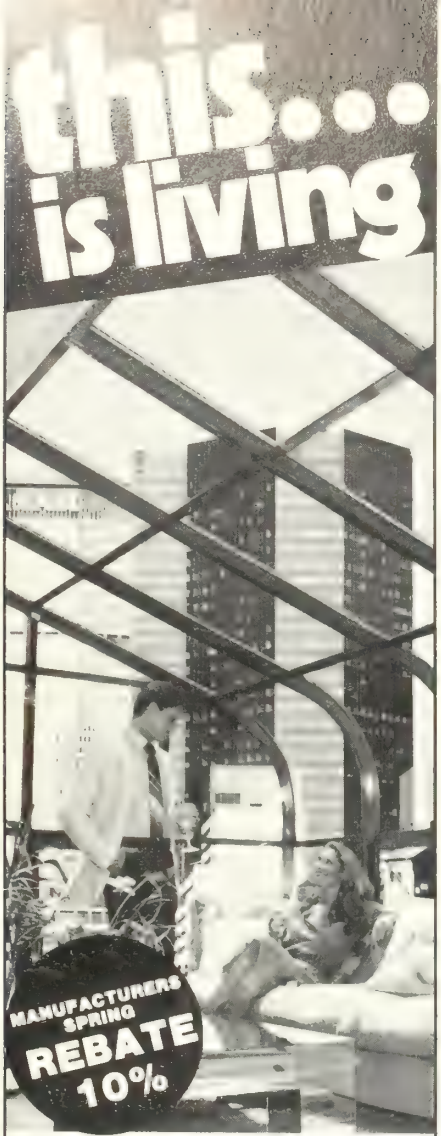


"Mule Skull with Pink Poinsettas", 1937. 40" x 30".
Oil on canvas. (101 x 76 cm.)

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the viewer that can't be rationally explained by mere plot summary. The old scourge of "decadence" hasn't lost his eye for the gleaming surfaces of life. □

David Denby

RESTORERS SHARE THEIR SECRETS

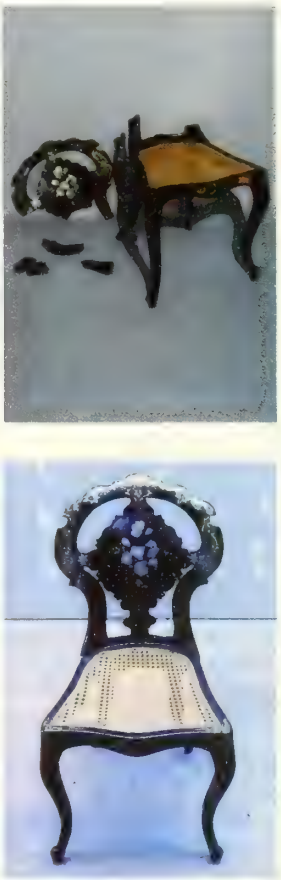
Visiting Sotheby's restoration annex near the East River in upper Manhattan is like being backstage at the opera, catching a glimpse of the highly specialized workings behind a world that combines art and business.

Sotheby's restoration department, headed by John Stair, works for the parent auction house, its customers, and for private collectors, dealers, and museums. Stair and his staff are available to advise prospective antiques buyers about the possibilities of rejuvenating a piece of furniture coming up for sale, but their main function is preventive maintenance and restoration. In addition to a large cabinetmaking shop, the restoration loft houses finishing rooms, where polishers, lacquerers, and gilders work, and a metal foundry.

John Stair, a capable lecturer, has conducted seminars for museum and other professionals for years, and since 1980 has been sharing his technical expertise and that of his staff of 24 with interested amateurs in Sotheby's Furniture Restoration Workshops.

Unlike so many so-called workshops that turn out to be mostly lecture and demonstration, the classes that John Stair runs are muscle-straining, finger-staining, hard, satisfying work. When students have finished their half-day of gilding under the instruction of one of the staff, they have gilded a piece of wood the way it has been done for centuries: gessoed it, sanded it smooth as glass, stroked on the red clay layers, applied the glue, tipped on the gold leaf, burnished it with an agate tool. They may not want to gild another piece, but they will never again take gilding for granted.

The focus of the workshop is the restoration of small pieces brought in by the students—a chair, a candlestand, a clock case. After Stair's opening talk and his evaluation of the students' pieces, the students take their damaged antiques to the cabinetmaking shop. Each amateur is assigned a cabinetmaker, who will teach repair methods—patching veneer, pegging a wobbly leg—but the student, often to his or her amazement, will do the job.



A typical Sotheby's Restoration before-and-after: a shattered chair made whole again.

Applying a French polish, the venerable technique that produces an incomparably deep satin glow, takes the largest block of time, since the finish is made of the thinnest possible layers of diluted shellac rubbed on for many hours without stopping. Stair's finishers-turned-teachers are tactful but demanding.

The next restoration workshop will take place May 12–14. The fee is $350, which includes materials and lunch for three days. Sotheby's Restoration is at 440 East 91st St., New York, N.Y. 10028; phone (212) 472-3463. □ *Elaine Greene*

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(Continued from page 116) "Gold boxes afford a tactile immediacy. You can hold in your hand something that symbolized the artistic heart of an era, a magic lamp, so to speak, although it's in the form of a box. Furniture, even paintings, has so often been changed or altered, but the boxes remain usually as they were—which is an object that the king and court used constantly throughout a day. Some boxes, like the large English gold box in the Wrightsman Collection, are impressive; boxes with miniatures are historically interesting as well as charming. But for me some of the boxes made in France from 1725–60 quite simply cause me to gasp with joy when I touch them. I own a lovely box painted by Massé, the best enameler under Louis XV. It's of a girl playing a lute and is a copy of Watteau's painting, *La Finette,* which the enameler owned when he made the box. The painting has faded but the box shows us the original colors. I feel as though I own the ghost of Watteau."

Clare Le Corbeiller, author of a general study of 18th-century boxes—*European and American Snuff Boxes* (Viking)—is associate curator of European sculpture and decorative arts, including the Wrightsman gold boxes, at the Metropolitan Museum in New York. She says this about the feel of a box: "The weight and the size are both marvelous. These boxes were usually 2½ to 3 inches long. They fit into your hand and are rather cozy as an object. . . . In spite of the elaborate etiquette that surrounded their use, the fact remains that it was a very beautiful object in the service of a filthy habit said to have given rise to the colored handkerchief."

Though the habit of giving and carrying boxes and taking snuff was as prevalent throughout all layers of 18th-century society as smoking cigarettes has been until recently, and boxes were made in wood, horn, tortoise shell, and porcelain as well as gold, the boxes that have had an enduring appeal were the gold boxes made for the court. "When you're talking about French gold boxes, you're talking Paris; about German boxes, you mean Berlin and Dresden," continues Clare Le Corbeiller. "There couldn't have been such a strong interest in boxes without highly organized monarchical societies where the ruler had a definite taste for them, had the money to spend, and wanted to make a splash in that way. This was *the* way to make a splash. The box was the all-time symbol for the 18th century."

Louis XV and XVI, Frederick the Great, Empress Elizabeth of Russia, and Catherine the Great all commissioned elaborate gold boxes. The German ones were encrusted with jewels. In France you could tell how important you were according to how many diamonds were on a box given to you by the king. The English used the fewest jewels of all. According to Clare Le Corbeiller the fashion in boxes changed constantly. "Any goldsmith working for the court kept up with fashion. He didn't often develop a personal style in a way that makes a box by, say, Ducrollay, Gouers, Hardivillers, or Delafons immediately recognizable to us now. In the 1730s all boxes tended to be made in a cartouche shape; in the '40s they were rectangular. Shiny, sculptural, all-gold boxes with inlays were popular around 1752. From 1757–61 copies of peasant scenes from paintings by Teniers were the rage, as were copies of Boucher or Drouais portraits of women who looked like Mme. de Pompadour. In the 1750s *quatre couleur* boxes (made from four colors of gold) were very handsome. Oval boxes took over by the 1760s and continued, though smaller and lower, in the second half of the century."





Top: Boxes sold at Sotheby's, N.Y., last December for $4,000–$10,000. *Above:* Box by C. le Bastier, Paris, 1771, Wrightsman Collection.

Often the fashion in gold boxes followed the fashion in decoration. The taste for Coromandel screens and furniture inlaid with Japanese black lacquer was reflected in boxes with gold frames set in with small plaques of lacquer. Sèvres porcelain presented the same Boucher-inspired subjects as the boxes. Gold and enamel ribbon and garland designs that wrapped around a box without any border or edges mimicked the look of Lyons silk. Box frames became miniature versions of the ormolu mounts on tables and desks. "There is a quiet unity to all the decorative arts in the 18th century," says Clare Le Corbeiller. So it is not surprising that collectors of furniture like the Charles Wrightsmans or collectors of French silver like the Harvey Firestones ended up with collections of gold boxes.

Kenneth Snowman explains that at the time, the French were always more interested in the design of the box rather than the value of the materials. "Among people who had always had money, the startling thing was always the charm of the box and its craftmanship. There were box collectors even in the 18th century. The prince de Conti had one of the best collections of both paintings and boxes ever. He was a great lover, and when he found a girl he liked and the assignation was successful, he would have her portrait painted on the inside *(Continued on page 184)*

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"The box was the all-time symbol for the 18th century. There wouldn't have been such a strong interest without highly organized monarchical societies where the ruler wanted to make a splash in that way"

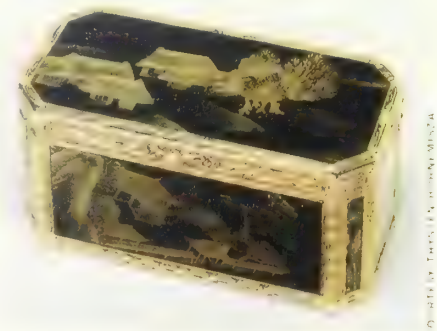
(Continued from page 182) of the lid of a snuffbox that he kept. He had the best of everything—the girl, and the box, too."

Mme. de Pompadour had over 40 boxes when she died, 17 of them the richly colored hardstone variety popular in Germany. Count Heinrich Von Brühl, director of the Meissen factory under Augustus the Strong, seemed to collect boxes the way people today collect wrist watches or shoes. We are told that he kept a book with pictures of suits of clothes with canes and snuffboxes appropriate for each, a separate page for each day of the year. According to Clare Le Corbeiller he'd consult the book each morning. "We wonder where these boxes were kept. Paintings of the 18th-century interiors don't show boxes sitting around on tables, so we assume they were kept in drawers like jewels." Brühl died in 1763. In 1764 Boswell, on a German tour, stopped by to see how the sale of his possessions was going and counted 5,000 snuffboxes."

In the 19th century Napoleon carried on the Bourbon tradition of presentation boxes and commissioned some rather handsome though severe boxes himself. The third and fourth Marquesses of Hertford and Sir Richard Wallace collected French furniture and boxes throughout the century. Today they are on exhibition in the Wallace Collection, London, in two glass-topped tables—row after row of finely wrought, closely spaced treasures. By the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, J.P. Morgan, Mrs. Henry E. Huntington (the Huntington Collection, San Marino, California), the French and English Rothschilds were collecting important boxes and in real terms they paid prices slightly higher than today's.

In the 20th century the Rothschilds are still collecting, and they have also given a major collection of boxes to the English nation—James de Rothschild's Waddesdon Manor was given to the National Trust in 1957. In Europe, where the Louvre's outstanding collection of boxes sets the standard, both Giovanni Agnelli and Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza have formed important collections. Americans like Mrs. Merriweather Post, whose boxes are at Hillwood in Washington, D.C., and the Charles B. Wrightsmans, whose boxes were given to the Metropolitan Museum in 1976, put together collections the public can now enjoy. Collections formed by the Henry Fords and the Harvey Firestones in the '60s were later sold at auction.

Two of the most interesting boxes in existence belong to one of the Rothschilds and the Wrightsman Collection at the Metropolitan Museum. They both belonged to Louis XV's minister of war, the powerful duc de Choiseul, who commissioned them from the miniaturist Louis-Nicholas van Blarenberghe, the artist who normally recorded battles and ceremonial occasions for the ministry of war. On one box, van Blarenberghe made a record of the interiors of Choiseul's *hôtel particulier* in Paris, and on the other (page 111) views of the exterior and gardens of the Château de Chanteloup, the duke's house in the country. Choiseul assembled one of the greatest collections formed between 1750–7 Almost all of his paintings—some which can be plainly seen in the Blare berghe interiors on the sides of t Rothschild box—are now in museu or national collections. Sir Fran Watson, who has written essays on t Choiseul boxes, likes best the min ture that shows Choiseul dictating two secretaries at once: "In his me oirs, Casanova tells how he was sent by Choiseul to tell of his escape fr the Venetian prisons. He mentio that the whole time he was telling t story, Choiseul was dictating simul neously to two secretaries—very oc but you can see him doing it on t box. The same miniature shows painting of Mme. de Pompadour har ing over the desk where Choiseul w dictating. I'm not sure where the pai ing is—perhaps it's a Drouais—but t desk now belongs to another Rot schild."



Box with Japanese lacquer panels, Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection.

At auction recently the most soug after boxes have been the portraits presentation boxes given by a king important people. Inlaid with min ture portraits of the king and son times his whole family (page 11 these boxes were the standard prese for the king to give an ambassador distinguished foreigner. "The intere ing thing is that you weren't suppos to keep it," remarks Sir Francis W son. "The king wouldn't have thoug of insulting you by giving a $50,000 t he'd give a box and you could take back to the government office that su plied these things and get the money cash. Mrs. Firestone's box (page 11 sold at Christie's November 1982 s for $308,000, had been given to th successive ambassadors to differe countries and had been returned to t foreign office each time for mon The king didn't give a hoot that t was going on any more than the pers who received the money."

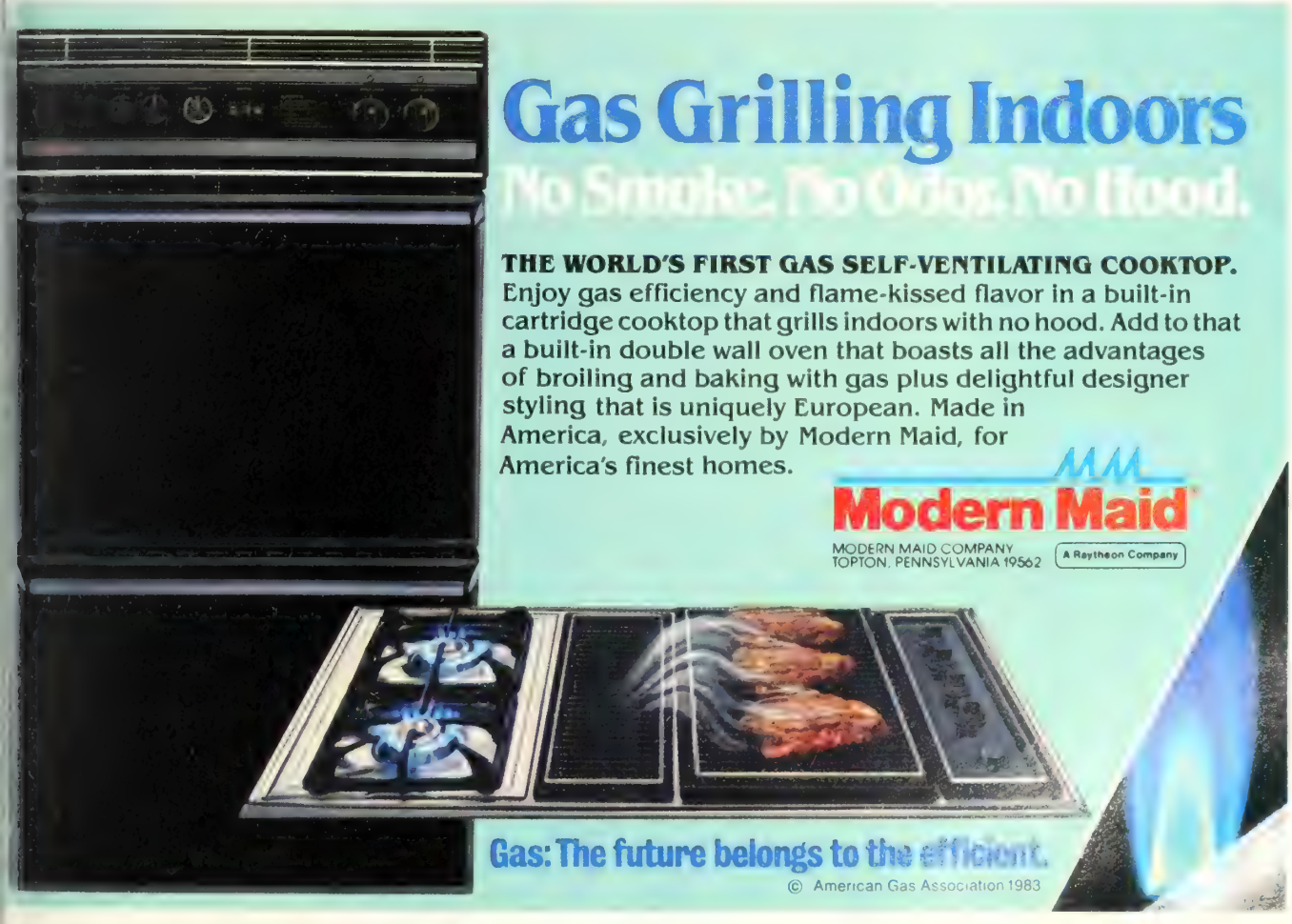
While the artistic qualities of t

t of box were not the point of its ex-
ence, presentation boxes tend to be
ong the most beautiful made. The
yer of the black-lidded, jewel-let-
ed Louis XV presentation box from
s. Firestone's sale was Martin Nor-
of S.J. Phillips Ltd., London, who
sold the box to Mrs. Firestone to
in with. "It is the best of this sort of
—the quality of the work, the peri-
the royal provenance—it has every-
ng. When we like a box like this we
lly pursue it," says Norton. Martin
rton and his sons bought many box-
at the Firestone sale as well as at a
heby's sale of certain Rothschild
es in London in June 1982. They
paid $803,000 for a jewel-encrust-
Frederick the Great box (page 112)
t sold at Christie's, Geneva, in May
2. "Before the sale we spoke to a
ifornia client who is forming a col-
ion, and he wasn't the slightest bit
erested. He was only interested to
w that my son had run in a mara-
thon two days before. A few weeks later he came to London, fell in love with it, and bought it," says Norton.

Another collector, one who had never bought a box before, happened to pass by Christie's the night before the Firestone sale. He had been invited to a reception for a different sale. He saw the boxes in the process and the next day bought three of the most important ones.

Anthony Phillips, Christie's New York specialist in old silver who organized the Firestone sale, is himself under the spell of the 18th-century gold box. "The major collectors buy passionately; it has nothing whatever to do with investment, though they are indeed good investments. They see something unique, beautiful, rarely on the market, and they plunge. Mrs. Firestone referred to her boxes as her children."

Not surprisingly there are several important new collections of boxes in the making, and there is also a sizable public that every year buys less expensive gold boxes in London either from the Nortons at S.J. Phillips or from Kenneth Snowman at Wartski and in New York from À La Vieille Russie. Anthony Phillips says that Christie's, Geneva, has two sales a year with about 200 boxes in each. Sotheby's New York gold-box expert, Gerard Hill, reports about 20 sales, including Sotheby's, around the world in a year. They both agree that a pleasing 18th-century box—especially if it's plain gold without any enamel—can be had for from $3,000–$5,000. Silver boxes, often made by the same craftsmen as the gold ones, sell for less. Swiss boxes, made either in the 18th or 19th centuries in imitation or as outright copies of Parisian boxes, are much less expensive but extremely handsome. Those who are so inclined can still find ways of succumbing to the charms of the 18th-century box. □



TAKING CARE OF M. PROUST

By Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale



Céleste Albaret at the tea table

Céleste Albaret, the 92-year-old housekeeper of the legendary novelist, recalls, over tea and madeleines, her life with the master of the cork-lined room

Proust smiled down on us, that day last December when we drove from Paris to Méré, a country village near the forest of Rambouillet. We had been invited to tea by his housekeeper, Céleste Albaret. All the ingredients for a Proustian divertissement were there: a French baroness taking two Americans to visit Proust's miraculously ageless servant, an hour of wandering down winding lanes, hopelessly lost, just as one loses oneself searching for the verb in a sinuous sentence by the great novelist (Was this Guermantes Way or was it Méséglise?), the baroness's anguished, "Please forgive me. I was sure I could find it. But never tell my chauffeur. I'd lose face if he found out." Then speeding past hedgerows and distant church steeples, their spires barely visible in the low gray skies of the Ile de France. And, at last, the comic coming on to the house that had been right in front of our noses all along.

At 92 Céleste is slender with the erect carriage of other days. And tall, surprisingly tall. "The same height," she proudly tells us, "as Monsieur Proust." She walks with hesitation but her youthful smile, the gay lilac-colored scarf at her neck, her alertness, and the pleasure she takes in entertaining us, sweeps away any idea of age. As we sat around the tea table we felt we were recapturing moments in the novel that never ceases to fascinate, never ceases to reverberate in the mind. Just as unexpected as the transformation, in *Remembrance of Things Past,* of the arriviste Madame Verdurin into the Princesse de Guermantes, here was Proust's devoted servant, 60 years after his death, the author of a book of memoirs, *Monsieur Proust,* and the heroine of a new German film, *Céleste.*

Her years with Proust from 1913 to 1922—the last nine years of his life—is her subject. While she passes the tea, petits fours (and the madeleines w brought), she shares her memorie with us. Her voice has the mello sound of woodwinds, and she choose her words with care. "I was twenty one, a country girl when I came t Monsieur Proust." And beautiful, on of us adds.

"I don't know," she answers, "bu once Proust said, 'You look like Lad de Grey.' And then he explained to m that Lady de Grey was a celebrated Er glish beauty and a friend of Diaghilev.

Sitting in Céleste's cozy house w were transported to the graveyard stil ness of that winter-chilled apartmer where all through the night Prous committed his lightning perception onto scraps of paper that Céleste the sorted and glued to the edges of hi manuscript.

"At first," Céleste told us, "all I di for Monsieur Proust was to deliver le ters and copies of the first volume of hi book, wrapped in pink for the ladie and blue for the gentlemen. Then on day he said, 'Chère Céleste, would yo condescend to prepare my café a lait?' It sounds easy but it wasn't. Th coffee had to be bought at one sho and one shop only, Corcellet's. The fi ters, too. Even the tray. I was to put th finely ground coffee into the filter an then, drop by drop, add the water t make coffee essence—exactly enoug for two cups. Monsieur Proust woul tell me the night before what time h was going to ring for his breakfast, 'tc wards noon' or 'towards one o'clock. But often he didn't ring till four, five or even six in the evening, which mear he had worked all night and slept a day. When that happened I made co fee over and over again so that it woul be perfectly fresh whenever he rang Otherwise Monsieur Proust com plained that it was *infect,* undrinkabl that it had no taste at all.

"And the *(Continued on page 188*



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"Sometimes he would keep me standing at the foot of his bed for hours while he spoke of the people he had seen the evening before"

(Continued from page 186) milk! It was delivered every morning, but the milkman had orders to come back with fresh milk in the afternoon in case Monsieur Proust had slept later than usual. *My* orders were to enter his room without knocking—that might disturb his train of thought—and quietly, without saying a word, deposit the coffee, the hot milk, the croissant, and the sugar on his night table. I could barely make out his inert figure under the bedclothes. An elegant gesture of thanks was my reward, but sometimes he would keep me standing at the foot of his bed for hours while he spoke of the people he had seen the evening before. And what killing imitations he would do of them. It never occurred to him to ask me to sit down, and it never occurred to me that I might as I was so interested in every word he said."

Céleste spoke with no air of complaint. She had simply described one of the innumerable services exacted by her phenomenal employer. And she was quite aware that his mundane little manias would find their way into his book in such sentences as:

> "An image presented by life really brings to us in that instant multiple and varied sensations. . . . The taste of our morning coffee brings us that vague hope of a fine day which formerly, when we used to drink it from a bowl of white, creamy porcelain, wrinkled like curdled milk, began to smile at us in the faltering brightness of dawn. An hour is not just an hour, it is a vase filled with perfumes, with sounds, with projects and with climates."

"But what did Monsieur Proust like to eat?" we asked. "Most of the time he took nothing but café au lait and croissants," Céleste said. "I think it was the milk that kept him alive. Occasionally he would ask me for fried potatoes, a filet of sole, or a bit of chicken. Once in a great while he would have a craving for something special: petits fours from Rebattet's, his mother's favorite bakery, or *poires Bourdaloue;* raspberry or strawberry sorbet, never any other flavor, from the Ritz; or preserves from Tanrade's, another of his mother's favorites. I recall his tasting the preserves and saying with a sad smile, 'Strange. It seems to me they used to be better.' At best, he would just pick at his food." And pursue his memories, we thought.

In a curious way the two intelligences—Céleste's compassion and understanding, and Proust's profound genius and intuition—met in total trust. For they were both convinced of what the world was to know only later: In that strangely isolated night-into-day life they shared, a masterpiece was being created. When we asked if Proust could have finished his book without her, Céleste said, "Of course." But we wondered.

It was often physical sensation that recaptured the past—what Proust referred to as "identical moments"—the lilacs of Combray recalled by the sound of pattering raindrops; the pigeons of the Champs Élysées by the restless sunbeams on his balcony; the cool, sweet taste of cherries by the muffled street noises in Paris on a hot summer afternoon; nostalgic memories of Venice or Brittany by the fresh winds of recurring Easter Days.

As Céleste spoke of her willing devotion to her master, we thought of Proust's life. Of how as a child and later, a bed-ridden invalid writing his great novel, he used his illness to create a tyrannical helplessness. Of how his overwhelming need to have every whim satisfied had inspired devotion in a trinity of women, his mother, grandmother, and finally Céleste. But it was only Céleste's devotion that was unquestioning. (All three women are, of course, in his book; Céleste is in part Françoise.)

Proust draws on himself for Marcel and the Narrator. But one wonders exactly how aware he was of his resemblance to other characters in his book. Like "Tante Léonie," he confined his life to his bedroom and performed the elaborate rites of the invalid. And just as Aunt Léonie observed life in th streets from her bedroom window an discussed what she had seen with he housekeeper Françoise, so did Prou sit at his window of memory and di cuss what he had seen there with Ce leste.

Proust also shared certain characte istics with his great creation the Baro Charlus, based largely on the poe dandy, and archsnob Count Robert d Montesquiou. While Proust denie that he himself was a snob, what coul have been more revealing than his fur when Count Pierre de Polignac ma ried the illegitimate daughter of th Prince of Monaco. "To think, Célest of giving up a name like Polignac t marry the daughter of a laundress! shall never see Count Pierre again. Pure, maniacal Charlus-snobbery.

It was Céleste's veneration c Proust, her grasp of his charcter, he fierce pride in having served him th struck us most. "At three o'clock on morning," she told us, "he came hom completely exhausted. Without think ing I knelt down to unbutton his shoe 'Oh, Céleste,' he said, 'you shouldn do that,' and as he helped me up h kissed me on the neck—but just bar ly."

How much, we thought, Célest who in a sense was Proust's only pupi had learned from him and how muc Proust, who did not see much good ness around him, had learned from th country girl who had shown him suc innocence, so much that was good Thinking that Céleste might be ex hausted by her tea party, we said, as w took our leave, that we hoped we ha not tired her with too many question "Oh, no, messieurs, not at all," she sai with a tender smile. "You have mad me relive my memories, and my mem ries are my life." □

Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale, th duo pianists, are the authors of Misi the Life of Misia Sert. *They recent spent six months in Paris preparing a b ography of Sarah Bernhardt.*

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Panels do not completely fill walls because Jennifer Bartlett wanted them to read as paintings, not decoration

(Continued from page 133) preoccupation of Matisse, an artist Jennifer Bartlett admires enormously). It is also about the nature of place and the notion of identity. Places, for Jennifer Bartlett, can be turned inside out like gloves. Like the sea in Homer, they are many-humored, much given to masquerade, and take a great deal of watching.

The Collectors have a small town garden and pool, indifferent in themselves, but just what was needed to trigger the artist's imagination. She wanted to bring the whole experience of that garden into the house, and set all the different effects of light on water chiming in counterpoint. The Collectors agreed. Their only stipulation was that everything be removable; this meant no painting directly on the walls. The only elements that are fixed permanently are the light-keyed tiles, designed by the artist, that frame the already existing fireplace. A duplicate set was made in case The Collectors pack up and leave.

Bringing the outside inside meant setting trap after trap in spaces that were irregular, variable, and most often awkward. The room was not large—ceilings about nine feet high. Nor was it a distinguished space, and it was broken up by the fireplace and two doors.

But here the artist was ringmaster to *ideas* about water, leaves, reflections. She urged them through the most unexpected permutations and sequences. Images change, materials change. Elements rotate. We zoom in, and back away from them. "It's a TV way of seeing," Jennifer Bartlett said. "I grew up in the TV generation." Rhythms shift as abruptly as in Stravinsky's *Ragtime.*

She started by taking several hundred photographs of the garden and its pool. She lived in the house when The Collectors were away and monitored the changing light and moods of her raw material.

She began with a plain-spoken charcoal drawing of an open gate leading into a garden. This was put next to a real door that leads around the corner to the real garden gate, which has been echoed exactly by the drawing.

"I went around the room in time," the artist said. The chalky blue fresco flecked with black and white that hovers on either side of and across the cavity of the tile fireplace stands for early morning. The circuit ends with the nocturnal darkness of the lacquer screen constellated with shapes of leaves from the garden. In between are continual surprises and entertainments for the eye: the precise staccato of dots on enamel-coated metal tiles; loosely painted brushstrokes darting and skittering like swallows across a rich oil paint surface; the nervous sparkle of enamel behind glass (this had to be painted backwards). Next come oil on mirror for a wintry image of a leafless tree, then an abstract matte collage-tempera on paper—reminiscing quietly about water and land and leaves.

"This is about different degrees of reflecting," the artist explained. She puts watery reflective surfaces to work, one after another: clear glass, mirror glass, tiles, a glossy white ceiling, the sheen of a gray slate floor—even the real glass window is enrolled to take part in the performance.

"The Collectors often rehang their pictures, so I wanted a movable element," Jennifer Bartlett said about the screen. The screen can have several identities. It can be stretched out flat to its full six-panel width. It can be partly folded to dialogue with the collage. And it can be brought forward into the room to form another plane.

Her English friends feel that this work is intrinsically American. It operates on a heroic scale that is implicit even in a small room. It is a confident piece, a gamble that works. It has made the house seem larger in an extraordinary way.

Jennifer Bartlett, who has unlimited energy and exceptional good looks, grew up in Long Beach, California. At the age of five she announced that "it would be fun to be a painter and I wanted to go to New York." It took a few years but she got there, after graduating from art school at Yale. "When I was young," she says, "I had the idea I wanted to see things in different ways. Emotional shading can go one way or another. What interests me is the relationship between two things." (I remembered how Matisse used to say that it was not the objects in a still life that he cared about but the spaces between them.) "What is a place, really? What happens when there is a change in light?"

When asked why she adopted the series concept, she said: "I am uncomfortable with the idea of 'making masterpieces.' *(Continued on page 192)*


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GARDEN OF THE MIND

(Continued from page 190) In this way I can do a lot of work. I can escape without feeling absolutely ghastly. And I can break things down. It's a way of working that reduces anxiety."

She has the greatest admiration for The Collectors. "In the first place, they don't think it's in bad taste to have a collection in depth. I think many English people have one picture by someone—maybe even Ghirlandaio—whom they consider to be very much in good taste . . . and that picture has to go with their faded chintz sofa, and their dogs. Those things have a place in their life that can be regulated. But I don't believe that art can be regulated. I think specifically that new art can't be regulated into taste. You have to give it free rein if you are going to become committed to it any way, and that is what The Collectors do."

The Collectors are perhaps somewhat in awe of their dining room now that it has been transformed into a Work of Art. Although it was finished months ago, they still take their meals in the large and handsome kitchen. "When they entertain," the artist say wistfully, "they bring their friends t see the collection. They look at th room. Then they go to a restaurant, lik the Japanese." Some furniture ha been set down with an "on approval" look—nothing definite. Jennifer Bart lett has a more casual approach. "I'm always hoping that they would ea there every so often, and invite guest sometimes." □

Rosamund Bernier is widely known fo vivid, illuminating lectures on art.

ARTIST'S DARING DREAM HOUSE

(Continued from page 108) chairs from Ireland's safari days, African artifacts and trophies. Among the latter are mounted impala and oryx horns, a giraffe's skull, a Cape Buffalo's skull, and a crocodile head on the rough-hewn "sideboard."

The second floor with its large bay windows seems light and even spacious after the claustrophobic ground floor. Here Ireland's collection of homegrown *arte povera* begins to assert its presence. Besides the broom sculpture one notices a pair of cement bookends on the floor of the hallway; a chair missing its seat and part of a leg, with a notebook attached to it by a chain; a window whose cracked glass has been removed and replaced with a copper plate (the glass has been framed in copper and mounted as a freestanding sculpture in the upstairs hall). Close to the rattan thrones is a battered metal storage unit whose shelves hold jars containing various accumulations related to the restoration of the house—sawdust; dust from the window frames; and, for some reason, a typed poem by Rimbaud. In the adjacent parlor is a wooden stool supporting a mound of wadded-up balls of wallpaper taken off the walls, and a bottle of "100-year-old water"—the result of washing a "100-year-old object." Accumulations of the building's previous owner stored in jars include some disgusting-looking dried pears and a cache of rubber bands that once held the daily newspaper when it arrived—a tape-recording of rubber bands being removed from rolled-up newspapers accompanies it, preserving a specific splinter of lived time. At first glance these humble exhibits look very much at home in the house, though they would seem to belong in the cellar. Their oddity announces itself only gradually. Even then it is hard to know exactly what message is being transmitted, beyond a sense of the holiness of the detritus that accompanies us through life. The trivia that Joseph Cornell enshrined in his boxes affects one similarly. What is finally conjured up is a strong sense of the past—the light of a specific Tuesday afternoon in San Francisco 80 years ago.

A certain standard of comfort is maintained despite the austerity—two white-upholstered Italian armchairs in the second parlor echo the wicker ones in the adjacent room: placed beside a fireplace, with a tree-stump table between them, they give a fleeting hint of European elegance reinforced by a wooden stand holding newspapers mounted on poles as in older German cafés. (But the newspapers—some 20 consecutive issues of the *South China Morning Post*—are another votive exhibit, commemorating in this case a visit to Hong Kong that Ireland made several years ago.) The imposing guest bed with its woven Oaxacan blanket suggests a Gold Rush hotel room, except for the anomaly of the non-indigenous horns on the wall. Just off a small pleasant office, the master bedroom with its unpillowed bed, is almost monastic, except for the presence of a few artworks including a "reverse drawing" by Ireland—that is, a Play-Doh rectangle to which scraps of paper have been fastened.

Ireland's house goes a step beyond Post Modernism's tongue-in-cheek acceptance of things as they are by actively celebrating the beauty to be found in grit, decay, and the incomprehensible jetsom that contemporary lives leave behind them. Like Schwitters and Cornell, and the poet Guillaume Apollinaire, he draws attention to the poetry of the baggage of daily life as opposed to that of "privileged moments" where we might expect to find it. Apollinaire wrote that modern poetry lives in barbershop windows; Ireland sees it in his palimpsest of scarred walls, dangling light bulbs, cracked windows, and irregular, anonymous spaces, as well as the polyglot exotica that coexists with them. In its small way, his house bears witness to the glacially slow forces both mundane and extraordinary, that have gone into the shaping of late 20th-century American consciousness. □

John Ashbery received the Fellowship of the Academy of American Poets in 1982, and his most recent book of poems is Shadow Train, *published by Viking Penguin in 1981.*

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BEYOND BEDS AND BORDERS: THE PERFECT PARTNERSHIP

Gertrude Jekyll and Sir Edwin Lutyens

By Henry Mitchell

Gertrude Jekyll, the supreme gardener who lived from 1843 to 1932, was cursed with unerring taste and a marked modesty and therefore is the lesser figure of the great partnership with Sir Edwin Lutyens.

She lacked eccentric mannerisms, she had little aptitude for those asinine palavers that pass for conferences and seminars, and, even worse, she was not male in the greatest of all male heydays, late Victorian and Edwardian England. She was a leader and a formulator of a new kind of garden, using the old cottage flowers in profusion with formal lines, and establishing the "mixed border" of bulbs, perennials, shrubs, and even small trees as the norm. She broke away from the prevailing taste of her day for endless unimaginative groupings of flowers that offered nothing but the uniform, blatant color of geraniums, lobelias, and so forth. She went all the way back to the 17th-century taste in gardens to rescue the daffodil, the lily, the rose, the carnation—all virtually unknown in Victorian gardens.

Lutyens, of course, was the admired architect of various country houses in England, of the British Embassy in Washington, and, most notably, of the British complex at New Delhi.

One hesitates for a half-second at calling Lutyens a callow youth, though that's all he was when in 1889, at the age of 20, he had the honor and the extreme good fortune to be presented to Miss Jekyll, then 45. It was his notion, unsubstantiated by any particular evidence, that he could design beautiful buildings, and my own dar suspicion has always been that h would not have done so without th formative guidance of the somewha fat lady with the bun and plump ha abounding in chicken feathers o plumage of that ilk. And now in ou own day comes Jane Brown with a su perb study of that partnership that re sulted not only in 100 good gardens i England, but that also, through Jekyll' books and through *Country Life* strongly affected gardening taste unt today, and even in such remote spots a California.



Above: Gertrude Jekyll around 1880 as she looked when she first met Lutyens. *Below:* the Jekyll palette of soft colors, silvery foliage.



If you ask, even now, any semi-san person to visualize the perfect garden he will see in his fantasy (and, alas, to often it is no more than that in a day i which one does not lightly build 11 foot-high stone walls) a Jeky garden, with pavement near th house, luxuriously generou steps of low risers into a gras path with borders of the best loved flowers such as lilies roses, peonies, irises, all min gled together, with a huge ol snowball bush (Viburnum opulus sterile) and a thick ram pant clematis (Clematis mon tana, usually) peering over th wall of the aged soft sandston or subdued rosy brick. Maybe pool, not for anything as chlor nated as swimming, but stag nant (or as the Psalm mor properly puts it) still wate suitable for water lilies an goldfish and for dreaming on a ultimate moments.

Brown's book, *Gardens of Golden Afternoon,* boasts 2 color and 126 black-and-whit illustrations or layout sketche and planting charts, and th text *(Continued on page 196)*


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(Continued from page 194) finds a just balance between comprehensiveness and compactness. It fairly radiates, as too few books nowadays do, an authority born of perfect familiarity and sureness with her subject, and is by no means to be confused with those commoner sorts of books written more out of hopefulness than knowledge, and more out of boredom or greed than love. Like Miss Jekyll, Jane Brown is seriously myopic (a thing that caused Jekyll to give up her first loves, painting and embroidery), and like Miss Jekyll she lets the work stand for itself, without little reminders of how exceptional it is or how great the labor producing it. I think we shall all like Miss Brown.

Jekyll not only procured commissions for her young architect friend, she also took him by the hand to various sites, discussing her own ideas and allowing him the privilege that lucky young males sometimes find, of absorbing from an older woman the wisdom and refinement of many years of experience, experiment, careful thought, and tempered judgment.

And her ideas, what were they? Brown's book allows the reader to infer, but I shall summarize:

First, her main point was harmony. It is said, not that I believe it, that she once objected to goldfish as the wrong color for a certain garden, and occasionally she is made fun of for her observation that the common elder is precisely the right tree for planting around modest farm buildings.

But come to think of it, there might be pools set in such a place that the brilliance of goldfishes would be a distraction rather than an ornament; and I could not agree with her more heartily that elders are precisely right for farm sheds. Try replacing them with Irish yews and see for yourself.

Harmony of color is what she is famous for, and she wrote about it in such detail and with such generous sharing of her knowledge that we can no longe plead we didn't know any better in ou own gardens. Of course, she gardene in Surrey, which, for any purpose c practical comparison with America, sunless. In that light, gorgeous ric (strident, the English would say) ye lows are shocking. Our own light is su ficiently intense that her color scheme may look weak to us, and if she had ga dened in Italy or Illinois, her palet would have been far stronger.

The point is she used colors tha looked right in her light, pearly mauve and champagne-biscuit-straw, so salmon rose, a touch of cerise. What crying shame she died before the ad vent of today's garden irises, for ther we find just those clear and pure bu largely soft colors she so greatly loved

But beyond color, she excelled, an excelled in a degree that has not sinc been equaled, in grouping textures an shapes: stratified stone with bergenia contrasting *(Continued on page 198*





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Edwin Lutyens at the time he first met Miss Jekyll.

(Continued from page 196) with yuccas contrasting with choisyas, contrastin with descending garlands of clematis.

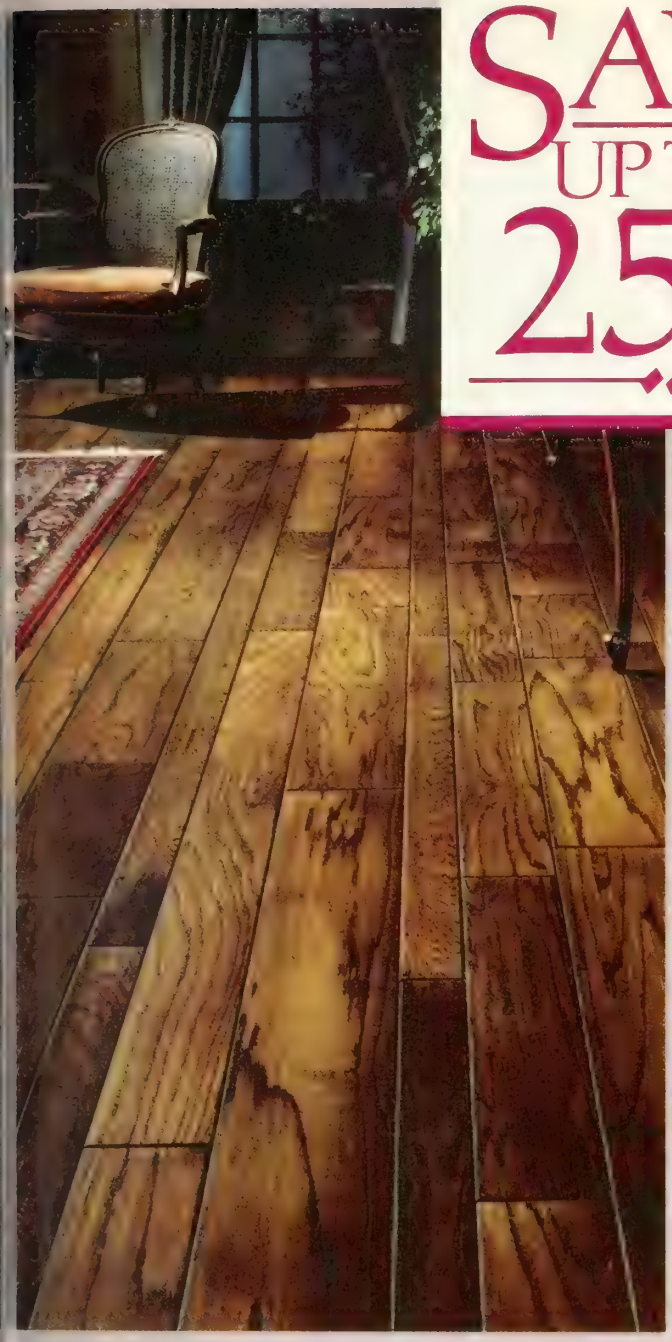
Landscape architects sometimes sa that the Jekyll manner is too compli cated and too labor-intensive for gar den design today. What they mean i that they lack her knowledge of plants her years of experience in siting then in the most flattering ways, and he general taste.

Sir Edwin himself—lest anyon think I am not magnanimous towar architects and landscape people—di not have her sureness and authority He frequently did things (in his work for effect, for amusement, for purpose of showing off: Indeed, the little bo aspect of the man is one of his merits.

But Miss Jekyll, without being in an way pedantic or purist or solemn abou it, never did things for easy effect, pre ferring the greater effect of perfec calmness and perfect rightness. So fa as I have been able to find out, in read ing and thinking about her work fo many years, she simply was incapabl of doing anything wrong, and certainl she was incapable of doing anythin vulgar, at least in her gardens, and suspect anywhere else.

She said once that she found it hard or impossible, to delegate the placin of a single plant to anybody else. Sh did not hesitate to do unclassica things, such as plop lilies or gladioli or God save us all, geraniums whereve she had an empty spot and though they would look well. Anybody wh has tried plopping things about wil testify (not that I intend to go on wit this confession) how unsatisfactor and dismal *(Continued on page 200*

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(Continued from page 198) the result usually is.

No gardener ever loved plants more. And yet no gardener ever had greater bravery and discipline in saying no to a plant, no matter how beautiful, if it did not amplify and illuminate its surroundings. The awe that many of us must feel toward Miss Jekyll is not that she knew so much, not that her taste was so catholic, not that her color sense was so acute, but rather that she knew how to get six times the usual value from a plant by placing it well and that she could deliberately deny herself a plant if it didn't fit, and didn't fit by her own standards of rightness, easiness, unstudiedness.

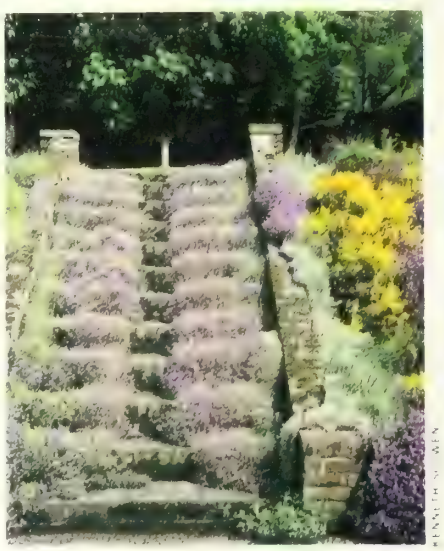
In many of the Lutyens-Jekyll gardens, there are touches of excessive drama, excessive exhibitions of costly materials, for not even Miss Jekyll can always tone down an architect with an open budget and a strong sense of his own cleverness.

Few things are more informative, in fact, than the Lutyens-Jekyll garden of Marsh Court, excessively admired by architects, and the pure-Jekyll gardens of Millmead and Munstead Wood, the first a tour de force and quite impressive, the other two inevitable, moving, and flawless. It is the difference between great talent and flair, and supreme art.

There is another thing about Miss Jekyll's gardening. She all but worshiped plants as plants, and while she said a great deal that might make the careless listener suppose she "used" plants as "material" for some effect or other, the truth is that she did not, or at least not as less gifted gardeners do. She did not blanch at putting five cartloads of compost and dead dahlia tops, etc., beneath the planting station of one clump of lilies (*Cardiocrinum giganteum* was the fortunate object of this solicitude, but many other examples could be cited). Everything, for her, had to be as well-grown as she could manage, and hardly any labor was too great to manage if she thought a plant required lavish treatment.

Anything smacking of opulence she abhorred, and her "cottage" at Munstead does everything but hide in the hay to play down its (to us) alarming cost. Where she could use marble, she chose the nearest sandstone; where she could have bronze, she preferred lead, where she could have her choice of the rarities pouring in from the ends of the earth, she preferred the common juniper, the common oak. So intense was her deep identification with common things that everything she touched became uncommon and, not to split hairs about it, unearthly in both beauty and rightness.

She excelled both in formal or geometrical garden designs (which she instinctively decorated with billows that broke the bounds) and with the woodland walks of common ferns and drifts of daffodils, so that one would say they were natural, except that one does not see such beauty in nature, only in nature treated by a fine artist.



Jekyll composed her "garden pictures" with one kind of flowering plant or a very few, carefully placed.

Millions, I think, can talk a fine garden, but few can create one. As in some other ephemeral arts, one regrets the passing of such great beauty, for gardens like Miss Jekyll's quickly lose their magic once the guiding spirit leaves it. Some idiot will put in just the wrong thing in just the wrong place, or will allow too much or too little of the wall to show, or will render the stone pavement ridiculous with a plethora of creepy crawly botonical creatures, c render it cold with too few.

If it were not for her books, and th unanswerable proof of photographs c her work, I would be the first to doub such a gardener ever lived, for all ga deners know how vastly more is a tempted than is achieved, and ho much easier it is to speak of great re finement and serenity and richnes than to approach them in any physic work.

Because of her rich legacy, richl documented, it is possible to learn. O ten we learn less than we think, as ou gardens too obtrusively remind us, bu at least through Miss Jekyll we glimps the country we mean to be stumblin toward, while without her we woul not even know the beauty we were un consciously dreaming about.

In the past year much has been mad of Sir Edwin Lutyens, properly hon ored for his architecture, no doubt, bu it is also right for a few rockets to b sent up in memory of Miss Jekyll, spir tual captain of the team, at least whe the team was at its best in gardens. It commonly said, of course, that sinc 1932 Miss Jekyll, or "Bumps," as sh was sometimes somewhat informal called, has redesigned paradise to i considerable or indeed endless im provement, and if so, this is a major in centive to virtuous living for ordina sinners, one would think. □

Gardens of a Golden Afternoon: The Story o Partnership: Edwin Lutyens & Gertrude Jeky by Jane Brown, Van Nostrand Reinhol $29.95

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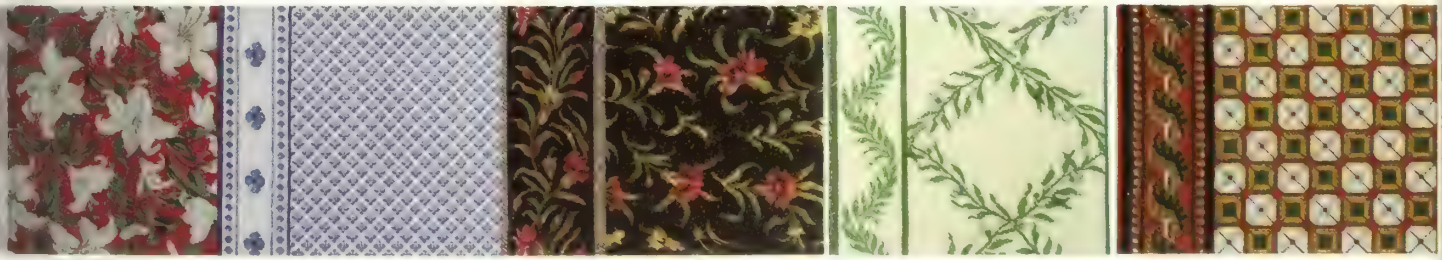
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THE ETERNAL SUMMER OF FAIRFIELD PORTER

By Lee Hall



Island Farmhouse, 1969
Oil on canvas, 78⅞ inches by 79½ inches.
From a private collection in Cleveland.

An exhibition of paintings by Fairfield Porter will be seen throughout the country during the next two years.* Porter's work is handsome and appealing and, more to the point, fated to elicit argument about both his own significance as a painter and the scope and direction of American nature painting. Comments seem to revolve around two key points: Here at last, hurray, is a painter's painter. And hurray. Here at last is a real nature painter.

Porter may be a nature painter because he paints recognizable subjects in a pleasant manner. And he may be a painter's painter because he handles paint intelligently and sensuously. Then, again, he may be neither or both, merely an easy victim of labels in lieu of looking and thinking. Whatever else, he deserves serious treatment, for he is a puzzling obstacle in the flow of the recognized mainstream.

While his peers, mostly Abstract Expressionists, girded themselves with furies and tore into painting to find a field for action and expression, Porter observed them and nature. He wrote extensively on the art of his time, championing artists very different from himself. He continued unfashionably to accept for himself aesthetic precepts and guidance from works by such French artists as Vuillard and Bonnard.

Awe surrounds the statement that Porter is a painter's painter, a term heavily charged with praise. I take it to mean that a painter's painter is a better painter than a doctor's painter or a teacher's painter or an art historian's painter.

A painter's painter makes paintings that require appreciative capabilities foreign to all save other painters, I assume. He offers an edge or dimension of quality, perhaps, that only other experts, other participants in the difficult and arcane art can truly perceive and savor.

But a painter who paints to and for other painters, and thereby confines his interests to their interests, is, I think, necessarily walking on a high, sharp, and very dangerous wire. Fairfield Porter, in this respect, is anything but a painter's painter.

He is, to be sure, a painterly painter. He handles paint well, sensually and directly, keeping his colors as bright as a summer day *(Continued on page 12)*



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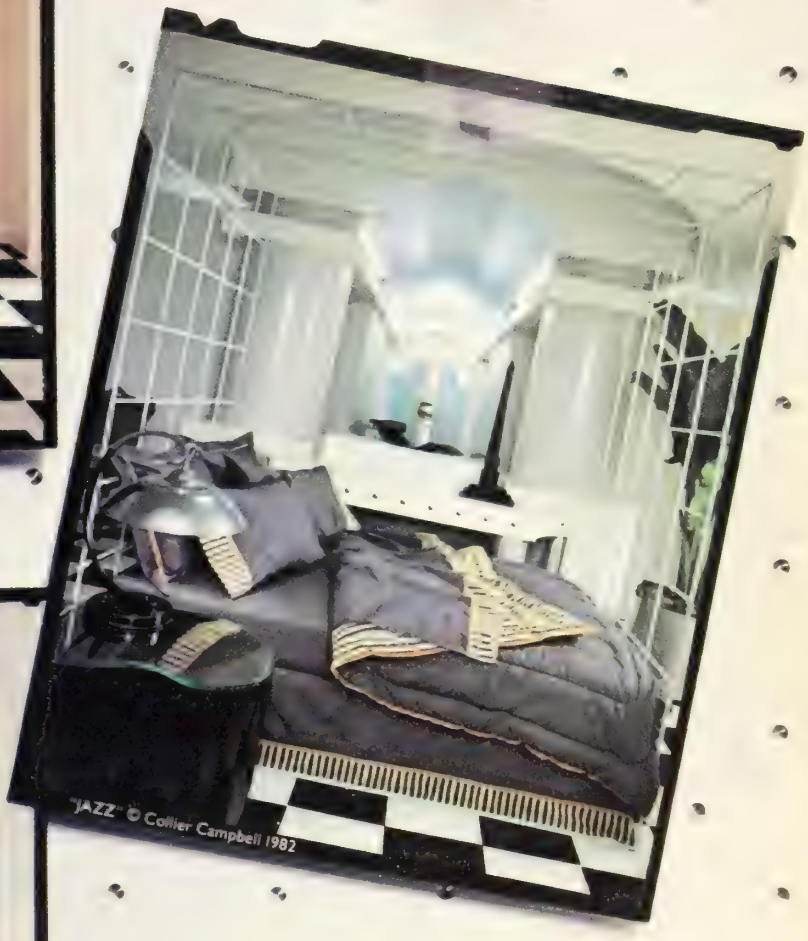






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"Porter uses nature to construct or reflect his own mind. Everything is planned, set apart and contained within the established frame of paintings of eternal summer, everlasting vacation, continuing family"

(Continued from page 8) in Maine, shaping form deftly without breaking the skin of the painting. Finally, however, he doesn't do anything in painting that isn't perfectly apparent and perfectly understandable to any reasonably intelligent, interested, caring human being. If one has eyes connected to a brain—a usual human circumstance—he should be able to see handily the whys and wherefores of Fairfield Porter's paintings. Much of Porter's appeal, his down-home likableness, grows directly from his treatment of paint.

Porter may be a real nature painter. While he paints recognizable pictures that are frankly and unashamedly representations of the observable and identifiable natural world, veering neither too noticeably toward interpretation nor expression and letting his eye be his guide, his work is not merely scenic. I think Porter falls stylistically somewhere between the bluntly pictorial pitch of Wyeth and the plastic abstraction-cum-nature of, say, Wolf Kahn, Robert Dash, Neil Welliver, or even Milton Avery. What, then, is Porter's particular nature?

As a nature painter he is more akin to Constable than to Turner. Porter's nature does not sweep in with a quick and terrible sword to storm at coasts or shake trees to their roots. He is one of the most accessible—even lovable—painters of the age. His audience is broad and growing. I cannot imagine that Porter would have strapped himself to a mast in order to observe and feel a storm at sea or that he would have stood through the night making watercolor sketches of the burning Houses of Parliament. Whether Turner actually did these things or not, it is nonetheless true that he did them in spirit and incorporated the doing and knowing into his view of nature-continually-influx. Turner seemed always to be trying to peer between the roiling atoms of a changing universe, to seize a view or moment that wholly and completely revealed the unmoved mover, the energies of force and freedom taking form in the observable world.



Fairfield Porter

But Porter, like Constable, selects views of landscape that meet his already thought-out requirements for order. He takes liberties as necessary to corroborate his opinion about order, his predetermined sense of rightness, of what is proper about nature as it appears in painting.

Even so, Porter's paintings are not especially romantic. Nature is openhandedly generalized in a totally direct and no-nonsense manner of painting. The subjects, finally, are pleasure and beauty. Thus, his paintings are good to look at, easy to take.

Nature, as Porter reconstitutes it, holds no secrets, responds to sunlight and the predictable indices of season and place. Neither darkly shadowed by mystery nor bounded by unyielding rock. Porter's nature is cozy, gentle, friendly; it is the neatly disposed, sensually pleasant world of an educated, confident, but overall prudent man. Porter uses nature to construct or reflect his own mind. Everything is planned, set apart and contained within the established frame of paintings of eternal summer, everlasting vacation, continuing family.

Aside from some of the portraits of children, few particulars mark Porter's portraits. *Aline,* for example, is in the real world a serious painter herself, a woman of notable flavor and force. In Porter's portrait of her, however, she sits beside a doorway and occupies space, catches sunlight, simply holds her physical position in the painting. It is a painting of Aline's body, not of her own strong personality. She is an object merely among objects.

Other portraits, similarly, seem to lack salt. I want to see the glint of steel from the sharp hard minds of Elaine de Kooning and Larry Rivers, two intellectual heavyweights. I want to see those minds enlivening and determining their bodies. Porter's people as well as his nature are too like milk jugs or flower bowls on an ever-set family table. *Nature-morte:* His people, with rare exceptions, merely transmute light.

Thus, nature, not people, furnishes Porter with the material he needs. Life is tidy, Porter seems to say; why should painting not be? He has weighed and analyzed, captured and claimed a painterly vocabulary from nature prior to painting.

Porter was never bitten by the bug that infected the Abstract Expressionists, his peers in time whom he greatly admired. Occasionally his paint responds to gravity and runs or spatters, but, immediately, the delinquent run or spatter is brought into immutable order, into the quietude and coziness of his world, of his mind.

There, in Porter's orderly mind, the world includes an understood sun and mists that rise, tides and waves that roll in and out, rocks and trees that line or wall the edges of islands or parking lots or hedgerows, and soft clouds that hang in the skies. Apples, roses, or islands, undisturbed by worms or thorns or storms, remain in their places as ordained by Porter. All catch and give back the sunlight.

Porter's world is good. There, a dog, all plod-pawed, *(Continued on page 14)*



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BUICK

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(Continued from page 12) lambent goes his round alongside a privet hedg while his lagging shadow, a sort of dog soul or alter-ego, reluctantly follow People take walks, sit under trees, rea books. An island farmhouse is define by sunlight and lawn shadows. A do rests in the deep shadow while a whit silhouetted boat waits offshore, re flecting exactly the dog's lassitude.

Lizzie, a youngster, remains at tabl with an abandoned book by Wallac Stevens, a jam jar, some flowers, and coffee pot. In another picture, sh stands soldier-straight and pubescen ly forceful while Bruno, the soft dog half-naps at her feet.

Porter was a nature painter and, in deed, a very painterly painter of na ture. But his nature is tame, sensuous unthreatening, and a comfortable con tainer for the well-ordered and well lived life. He painted ordinary object and subjects, common scenes, thing that surrounded him easily. His pic tures are gentle companions, good na tured and good looking. In a sense they are adult illustrations for our al most forgotten castle and wizard day dreams. He almost convinces me tha he paints a real world. And here, pre cisely, is where Porter strikes his own spark.

Anyone can visit Porter's island o forever-after summer afternoons There, if I listen carefully, I believe th wind gentling Porter's painted natur will begin to sound like Scarlatti playe on a harpsichord in another room. □

**The exhibition of paintings by Fair field Porter, organized by Kenworth Moffett, was visited by 83,413 peopl during its stay at the Museum of Fin Arts in Boston, January 12 to March 13 1983. The exhibition will travel durin 1983–84 to the following museums i the United States:*

Aug. 13–28, 1983
Greenville County Museum of Art, Greenville, S.C.
Nov. 9–Dec. 31, 1983
Cleveland Museum of Art Cleveland, Ohio
Feb. 18–Apr. 22, 1984
Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pa.
June 1–Aug. 19, 1984
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, N.Y.

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BEYOND THE FAME

Jonathan Miller, the polymath in question, talks about his new direction

By Ian Hamilton

In British cultural circles it is usually assumed that versatility betokens shallowness, dilution—there is felt to be something "flash" and perhaps fraudulent about a man who knows too much or does too many things too well. In some countries, an intellectual who—say—spoke seven languages would be held in high esteem. In Britain he would probably be arrested as a spy. Just to be on the safe side, as the saying goes.

Jonathan Miller has often enough found himself the target of this kind of reflex grudgingness: medical man, satirical-revue star, eccentric stage director, personable TV sage, whirlwind conversationalist, and so on—the list is too long and too diverse *not* to arouse envy and dismay. Few people can feel truly comfortable with Miller. To the doctors, he seems to be saying: You too could be an expert on minor 18th-century painting. To the poets: You too could learn how the nervous system really works. And in each case, the unspoken punchline is: If you were smart enough, like me.

Over the years, of course, Jonathan Miller has been lavishly acclaimed as the "Renaissance man" of British intellectual life, and it would hardly be true to say that his gifts have not been widely appreciated. He has had his clashes with the English theater establishment (in other words, Sir Peter Hall) and some of his more inventive stagings have been regarded as perverse or silly, but he is solid and "respectable" enough to have been called in by the BBC to rescue its recent TV Shakespeare series, and in the recent New Years Honors List he was made a Companion of the Order of the British Empire (C.B.E.), which is one notch down from a knighthood in the honors league. He is shortly to deliver the prestigious Clark Lectures at Cambridge University, and his subject will be "to do with the Mind's Eye." Officially, and in the eyes of most neutral observers, his career has been a huge success. Even his detractors concede that there is no one quite like him when it comes to "re-imagining" a classic text: Who else, for instance, would set *Rigoletto* in the world of Al Capone? Or *The Magic Flute* in a scholar's dream study with wall-to-wall books and center stage dominated by a large Egyptian sarcophagus out of which the actors occasionally appear? Miller's directorial ethos involves a weird mix of the vulgar and the exquisite: On the one hand, there is his populist insistence on the need to break down sta old theatrical conventions, to make op era more "available," less of a museu art; on the other, there is his almo teasing delight in the wickedly er coded historical jest, the sly cultural a lusion. It is a kind of tightrope act, an the perils are obvious. More often tha not, though, Miller has got the balanc right.



Jonathan Miller at home in his book-lined study

And now, at 48, he is about to give all up. Late last year, Miller announce that he was leaving the theater to r sume his medical career. He had a cepted a visiting lectureship a McMaster *(Continued on page 2*



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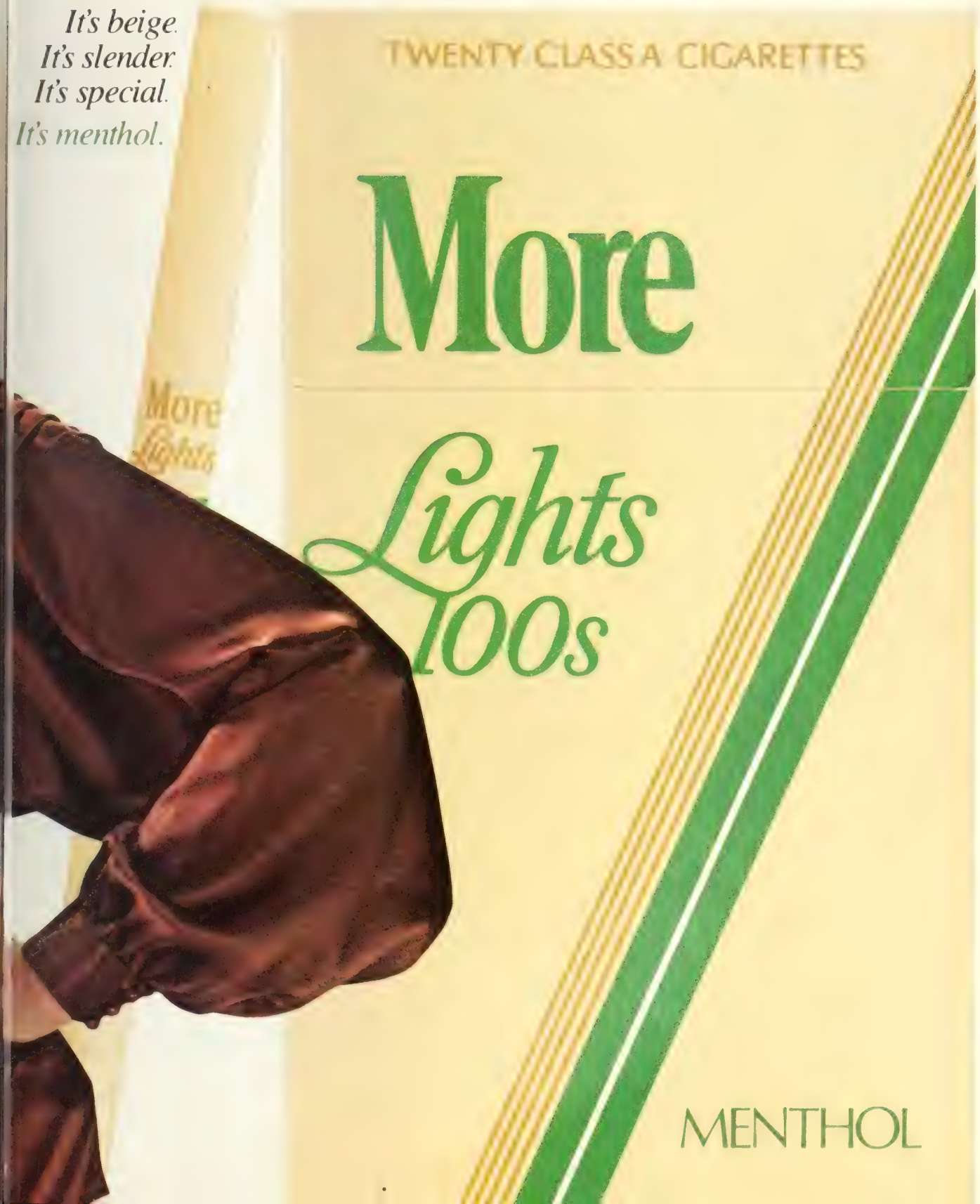
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(Continued from page 16) University in Hamilton, Ontario, and he would be using his time there to "retrain" himself and to get abreast of new clinical procedures. His field will be neuropsychology—in particular he aims to study the effect of heart attacks on their victims' speech, movement, general demeanor, and so on. As to the theater, he would complete his outstanding obligations, (the last of these to produce in May *A School for Scandal* for Robert Brustein in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and then, alas, would not be seen again.

Is all this to be believed? After all, Miller has made similar renunciations in the past. Already, the sceptics are predicting an early, and probably splendid, return: "He wants to be *wooed* back," one such said to me the other day. Certainly, when I watched Miller rehearsing *The Magic Flute* in Glasgow a few months ago, I found it hard to imagine him abandoning a craft that so clearly afforded him such simple *fun*. Even at a fairly mundane lighting rehearsal, his concentration was total but utterly unsolemn; his rapport with the 30 or so stagehands and technicians seemed effortless and—on both sides—genuinely warm. His jokes may not have been entirely understood, but the laughter was ready and affectionate—a shade protective, even. And this was on a day (a "quite typical" day, I was assured) when Miller was being plagued with interruptions: from BBC Television, which had arrived to film an interview; from the designers of his forthcoming TV production of *The Beggar's Opera*—they had traveled up from London to show him an intricate scale model of the set; from Radio Scotland, which wanted to know if this would really be his last British production; and so on. Somehow Miller managed to be nice to everyone without disrupting his rehearsal. It was an impressive, if quite unenviable, performance. Every so often, he would turn to me and say: "You can see the pleasure in all this, can't you?" I supposed I could.

"No, but really," he said later. "This is what I'm going to miss: the working with a group, the comradeship, the



DAVID MONTGOMERY

Jonathan Miller seated casually on the steps shaded by the Victorian portico of his London house.

laughs. And there's the excitement of knowing that you have got something absolutely right, the feeling of "Eureka!" when suddenly you see how a particular problem can be solved. And then the satisfaction of having others see it too, and work toward it. I will miss all that. But in the end, it is all playing around, isn't it? It's a bit silly. And I am tired." In a mood like this, Miller will readily characterize his 20 years in the theater as a kind of truancy from high seriousness; he describes himself as like a child who can't help agreeing to go out to play when he should really be indoors with his books.

He would not, though, be pleased to hear others describe him in this way. At least part of Miller's weariness, he admits, has to do with having to respond to the sneers and jibes of mediocre theater critics, cultural pundits, or even just metropolitan cocktail party gossips. "It is marvelous to think that I won't need to care about *them* any more," he says. After two decades of exposure to the public gaze, he is still surprised and hurt by "the awful things people can say," still chafes and broods over the bad opinions of critics who are very often barely worth his notice. And when he is asked to look back over his career in the arts, he persistently sees it as having in some mysterious, important way been sabotaged, or at least interfered with, by "those people."

In his own view, Miller has always been treated with suspicion. It began, he would say, at the beginning, when he interrupted his medical career to enjoy the success of his first stage hit—the revue *Beyond the Fringe*—and it gathered momentum in the early '60s with a television show he did with Susan Sontag (a "spontaneous" highbrow talk-in, which by all accounts came over as the last word in stumbling pretentiousness). In 1966, suspicion became fully strident accusation with Miller's Freudian film version of *Alice in Wonderland*.

Around the time of Miller's television *Alice*, the magazine *Private Eye* began running a column in which a verbose bore called Dr. Jonathan waxed phony-aphoristic to his craven Boswell. It was feeble stuff and after a few appearances seemed gratuitous and strained. The *Eye*, though, ran the column for several years and still wheels it out from time to time, when short of current targets. As a result, there are many for whom, over the years, Dr. Jonathan has become the arch-Pseud, and it is still fairly commonplace to hear "the good Doctor" casually written off as . . . well, more of a showman than a thinker, more of a name-dropper than a scholar, more of a novelty-merchant than a seeker of insights that are genuinely new. Much of all this Miller really does find sharply hurtful, and he remains convinced that the *Private Eye* campaign (motivated, as he sees it, by a sour English "county" mix of philistinism and anti-Semitism) has had a lasting effect on how he is generally perceived—and thus, in subtle ways, on the shape of his career.

Of course, in order to fathom Miller's sense of grievance, one must also acknowledge him to be the failure he now and then insists he is. Not easy to do, even when he points out how little money he makes as a director, or how few theatrical outlets are actually available to him. "Real money," he points out, has somehow passed him by: so too has Broadway, the cinema, the international opera circuit, the British National Theatre, and so on. He is not sure that he actually *wants*, or ever wanted, any of these things . . . but even so, *(Continued on page 22)*



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McGUIRE

(Continued from page 20) they've passed him by. "And who wants to be an aging theater director? For actors, it's different; they can just start playing older parts. Not so a director."

As much as anything else, one feels, it is the specter of becoming middle-aged and marginal that has driven Jonathan Miller back to medicine. When pressed, though, he refuses to portray the next stage of his life as a retreat. Indeed, when he "gets going" on his future prospects he swiftly shakes off his valetudinarian malaise. After 10 minutes or so on the subject of neurology he could almost be describing an imminent first night or a new way of staging *Hamlet*. Surely, he argues, there is every chance that his director's skills might open a way into some original and lasting contribution to medical research. The theater man's ear for speech cadences, his eye for the subtleties of gesture and expression: Gifts of this sort are rarely on offer in the medical profession, even in the "communications" area in which Miller plans to specialize. "I mean, what *really* happens when you have a heart attack? Why, for example, do some coronary victims adopt a kind of facetious, childishly jokey style of discourse? Is it that they have actually become infantile and silly or is it just that they have been forced to seize on a demeanor that is manageable? To answer that would take months of scrutiny. Of course you need clinical training, but if you also have . . . do you see what I mean?"

I do, I do . . . in fact, after an hour or so of this, I am ready to nominate Miller for the Nobel Prize. For what I'm not quite sure. And nor is he. What does seem certain, though, is that Jonathan Miller no longer cares to be honored for mere brilliance, nor for being Not Quite Like Anybody Else. This time, he is determined to say No when his chums invite him out to play. I have the feeling that he will see it through, and that we might all turn out to be grateful that he did. □

Ian Hamilton is the author of the recently published Robert Lowell: A Biography *(Random House)*. He has also written two books of poetry and criticism, and was the editor of the *Review* and the *New Review* in London.




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THE JAPANESE WAY: YIN-YANG SPACE

How an ancient culture interprets the effect of space on our behavior

By Donald Richie

THE AESTHETIC TOWNSCAPE
Yoshinobu Ashihara
Translated by Lynne E. Riggs
MIT Press, 183 pages, $20

Attending the Hakone Conference near Tokyo last fall, I decided to go to the bar after my bath. In the provided slippers and *yukata* kimono I entered and was refused service as being improperly dressed. Surprised, I complained, asking why, if shoes and Western clothing were considered necessary, we were given slippers and *yukata* at all. I was told that these were for use in my room; that I was not staying at a Japanese-style inn; that I was, in fact, staying at the Hakone Kanko Hotel.

Of course. I had confused spatial considerations. In a Japanese inn the entire building is thought to be "inside." The room doors have no locks, the entire building is locked at night; one wears, as at home, Japanese casual dress everywhere. In a Western-style hotel, however, the "outside" comes right into the building. Individual rooms have locks, the lobby has none; the bar is a public room, not a private one, and dress must accordingly be adjusted.



Tatami mats and shoji screens in a house by Shosei Nakamura



The Akihabara quarter of Tokyo

I had broken a space taboo, just as ludicrously as do those country Japanese who take off their trousers on the bullet train and, decent in their knee-length summer underwear, enjoy a wrongly presumed "inner" spatial order. Western-style areas are all, in foreign fashion, considered "outside." Only the truly and traditionally Japanese areas are "inside."

Cultural assumptions regarding in and out are strong everywhere, but it is only in Japan perhaps that the difference is so emphasized. Indeed, it sometimes seems as though the entire country is to be explained through this dichotomy. Belonging to an inner group (the *nakama*) is a necessity for the Japanese; those outside (the *yosonin*) are truly beyond the pale.

Shortly after my cultural embarrassment I was reading Yoshinobu Ashihara's book and it all became clear. As he explains it, all of Japan's spatial concerns are controlled by inside/outside assumptions. These govern the principles of Japanese architecture, of Japanese civic planning, such as it is, and explain a number of seeming anomalies.

Why, for example, is it that traditional Japanese rooms are spatially so superbly designed, and that the outside of the room, the city itself, is so undesigned as *(Continued on page 26)*



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(Continued from page 24) to resemble the primordial clutter from which it presumably sprang? The answer is that "the view from without in Japan takes second place to the view from within. In fact, it is often summarily dismissed as a matter of concern in building design. In other words, the sensitive treatment accorded to interior space does not extend to thinking with regard to the exterior order as called for in modern urban planning."

There are reasons for this. Ashihara, himself one of Japan's most interesting architects, finds that Western spatial concerns begin with the concept of the wall, but that Japanese concerns are based upon the concept of the floor, that laid-out and originally sacral area. An indication, in city terms, is the naming and numbering of streets.

In Japan, as the frustrated visitor has often enough discovered, streets are neither named nor addresses, in our sense, numbered. "Streets are seldom named . . . in most Japanese cities it is customary to indicate an address by reference to numbers corresponding to the established community area or blocks. The practice of naming on the basis of an *area* rather than a street derives from the same thinking that produced the architecture of the floor."

It also presumes a civic extension of strong inside/outside concepts. For this reason, to locate a Japanese address, one must eventually discover and address an "inside" person, someone who lives there: the passing *tofu* boy, the cigarette-kiosk woman, the cop on the beat.

One of the results is that the "inside" takes precedence over the "outside," making any kind of civic structure, or even civic order, unlikely. Roads and streets are merely spaces between buildings; parks are where buildings have not yet been built; there is no governing style or design from outside—each building is built in a style the owner, or the architect, favors.

An example of this bias toward the "inner" (an example mine, not Ashihara's) is what has happened to the Tokyo Metropolitan Government building. It was designed a number of years ago by Japan's most famous architect, Kenzō Tange, a man who usually attempts to wed the "best" of East and West. In this large structure he made the outside look rather Japanese but also put in large recessed windows so that those inside would have a view and those outside could admire its typically Western see-through aspect.

He did not, however, allow for the fact that those in the building would be not only bureaucrats, but *Japanese* bureaucrats, a breed by nature even more traditionally conservative than the foreign variety. They at once began constructing an appropriate "inner" environment. Now, viewed from the outside, each window is barricaded with filing cabinets, stacks of documents, piled-up desks. From the inside, however, the view is enclosed, cozy, interior—things traditionally prized.



FRANK GRANT INT'L STOCK PHOTO

The city of Thira on the Greek island of Santorini.

When such traditional Japanese spatial concerns are applied to an entire townscape, the clutter and mess are considerable. The inside is private. It belongs to the owner and is consequently well cared for. The outside, however, since it belongs to everybody, belongs, consequently, to no one. Anything can happen to it.

There is a famous example in Tokyo's Shinjuku, in an area where some degree of urban care seems to have been taken in, at least, skyscraper placement. But, right in the middle, is "a huge multilevel intersection [tha blocks the way to nearby buildings a pedestrians must go complete around it." In Ashihara's quite acc rate view, this occurs *because* Weste ideas on civic planning were put in use.

Civic planning is an operation th rarely succeeds anywhere and certain has not in Japan. Ashihara comes dow quite hard on the Modern Archite ture Movement. He is particularly cr ical of Le Corbusier, maker monstrous Chandigarh, a vast civ structure designed for automobiles b where "the vast majority of local pe ple do not even own automobiles," desolate Brasília, and—by extensio through his Japanese disciples—of th barren stretches of the Tsukuba ac demic town in Ibaraki, near Tokyo.

The proper way to "the aesthet townscape" is the opposite of pla ning; it is through the observation the inside-outside spatial concepts the culture one is discussing. The b zaar at Isfahan, the city of Thira Santorini, the towns of Alberobell and Cisternino in Italy—these are e amples of "natural" townscapes whe the inner/outer dichotomy is observe and respected. Such also was old Shi juku before the comfortable warre was destroyed to make way for the ne skyscraper center.

At the end of his wise, radical, an thoughtful book, Ashihara states h intentions: "What I have hoped to d in this book is to show that townscap must be predicated above all on th presence of human beings and to pr vide a practical guide to urban lan scapes that affirm and celebrate th existence of man."

And one of the ways is just throug the apparently innate consideration that he treats, the feelings one has fo inside and outside, the extensions tha these create, the natural and organi living places that are possible if they ar observed. Put in this way, my sartoria misadventures are salutary. Next tim I will stay at a Japanese inn. □

Donald Richie writes on Japanese film His latest book is Zen Inklings *(Weath erhill).*



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THE STEAMY SIDE OF PARADISE

The Everglades, Florida's lush, prehistoric preserve, offers a mysterious journey through swamps and salt-water jungles

By Alison Lurie

Hardly an hour away from Miami's clamorous shopping malls and crowded beachfront hotels there is an almost unknown expanse of land and water twice the size of Delaware, spectacularly beautiful, amazingly various, and—as yet—utterly unspoiled: Everglades National Park.

Unlike most tourist attractions, the Everglades is so vast that it never seems overrun with visitors. From anywhere along the little-traveled main road you can walk directly into a wide, unpeopled, almost prehistoric America—into endless expanding miles of velvety virgin grassland and pine, glowing sapphire forests entwined with orchids and creepers, slow transparent jade-green rivers teeming with strange fish and giant turtles, and mangrove jungles laced with the nests of the great aquatic birds that Audubon painted. Fauna and flora that are now almost extinct outside the park, or becoming so, survive here, including Hart Crane's "Royal Palm":

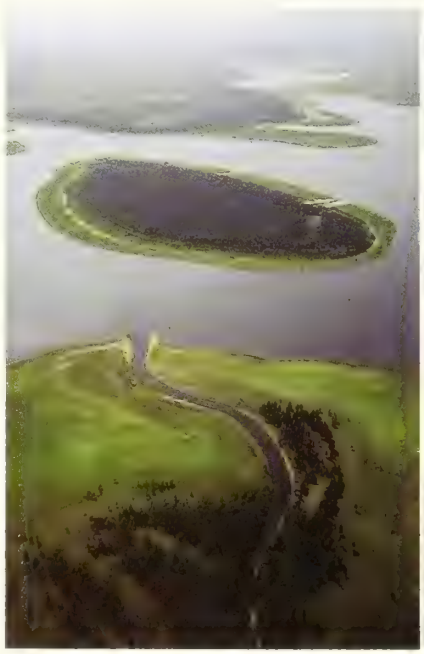
> Green rustlings, more-than-regal charities
> Drift coolly from that tower of whispered light.

Even to stop at the information center by the entrance is to have the sensation of slipping back in time. The low, widely spaced white-stuccoed buildings, the casual down-home manner of the staff, reminded us of a period when government architecture was unpretentious and people were naturally helpful to strangers. We were asked what our interests were, and then advised as to what would be the best place for us to start exploring. Our choice was wide, for the Everglades contains eight different ecosystems, each with its own mix of water and soil and its characteristic plants, animals, birds, and fish.

The existence of this great wilderness area is the result of a unique topography and climate. From Lake Okeechobee west of Palm Beach the land slopes very gradually southwards. Lower Florida is shaped like an old-fashioned sugar scoop. Both coasts are higher than the center, forming a tremendous broad, shallow limeston trough along which a great river flo slowly from the lake to the Gulf Mexico. This amazing expanse of mo ing water is 40 miles wide but oft only inches deep; for much of its lo journey to the sea it is, as the India called it, a grassy river—Pa-hay-okee

The staff at the Visitor Center su gested that we first stop at the Anhing Trail, a few miles inside the park. He the limestone riverbed becomes dee er, forming a fresh-water slough Twenty feet from our car, beneath th tall plum-colored feather fans of stand of pampas grass, we saw our fir alligator. The giant reptile was hal crawling, half-swimming through th shallow water, propelled not so muc by its stumpy legs as by the sinuou thrashings of its heavy tail; its w black-leather body was ridged length wise with blunt pyramids like a child scale model of a mountain chain. Th alligator was so close to us that it woul have been easy—though hardly wise—to touch it. It seemed darker and den er than anything else within sight, as it had come from a planet of far greate specific gravity than this one.

Farther along, a boardwalk of pin cut through thickets of yellow-fruite pond apple and pale-green flutterin willow. Many of the larger trees wer festooned with air plants and orchid as if for a gala ball. Others were lan guorously dying in the embrace of th beautiful but insidious strangler fig This tropical creeper, whose bark re sembles the skin of a kiwi fruit, sprout from a tiny seed dropped by some bir in the branches of a host tree, then put out glossy green satin leaves and rapid ly growing tentacles that snake roun the trunk to root in the earth below Eventually the older tree is completel enclosed and squeezed to death; it be comes a gray *(Continued on page 32*





The islands of the open glades, dense with clusters of butterfly orchids among tropical and temperate hardwoods. The white ibis, who fishes for his prey in shallow water.

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(Continued from page 30) driftwoc corpse within the body of the fig.

In the deepest part of the slough th tapestry of reeds and brush and tre gave way to a floating carpet of wat lilies, their broad wet leaves broken b huge green-stemmed gold lollipops flowers. The clear water beyond w thick with bass, mosquito fish, elonga ed garfish with screwdriver jaws, an fat giant turtles like swimming so cushions. Dragonflies skimmed ov the surface, and we saw many exot birds. Among them were several of th brown and black anhingas, or snak birds, that give this nature trail i name; Audubon called them "the ver first of all fresh-water divers." Just a he noted a century and a half ago, the customarily "stand erect, with the wings and tail fully or partially sprea out in the sunshine, whilst their lon slender necks and heads are thrown a it were in every direction by the mo curious and sudden jerks and benc ings."

Serious visitors to the Everglades d not limit their explorations to the we lands near the entrance, but continu on deep into the park through nearl 40 miles of pine forest, cypress swamp grassland, and salt-water jungle to th Flamingo Visitor Center on Florid Bay. For the last 15 miles of the driv the road is bordered on both sides wit trees two stories tall. Over them ha been flung, as if for some triumpha procession, a net of morning-glor vines, some flowering creamy white others a brilliant turquoise or fluores cent lavender.

The inn and marina at Flamingo like the rest of the park, seem to hav been magically sheltered from time Scattered over several wooded acre along the shore, they drowse at the saf center of two million square miles o unpolluted air and water. All the hurr and tension of the contemporary worl vanish; for visitors, there are no news papers, magazines, or radios excep those they bring with them. The quie comfortable rooms of the inn do hav television, but the picture and soun on our set were as blurry, gray, and fad ed as an old high-school text; the could not compete for a moment wit the glowing, bird-thronged landscap outside.

The next morning we made our wa to a pond only a *(Continued on page 38*



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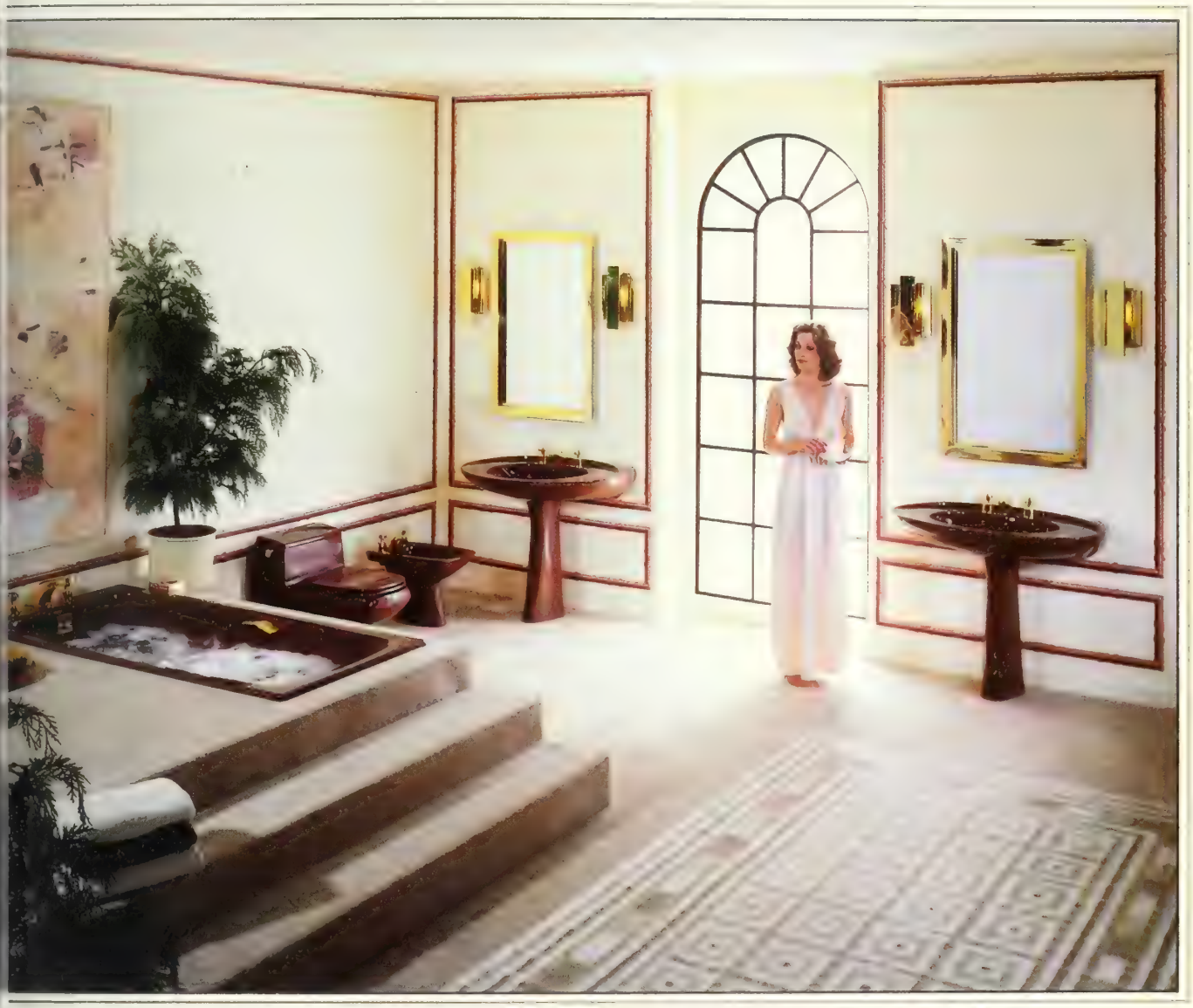
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B. THE 100 PEDESTAL LAVATORY



C. THE 70 PEDESTAL LAVATORY



E. THE TOILET



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(Continued from page 32) few miles from the inn and famous for its birds during the winter months. In the Everglades there are only two seasons, wet and dry. During the latter, which lasts from November through April, the water level sinks, and there is a spectacular concentration of wildlife in and around the remaining deep-water pools and sloughs. Though it was only about a hundred yards long, the pond was dense with birds, drawn there by the excellent fishing. They far outnumbered the spectators, of whom they took little notice.

Not 30 feet from the road three great pink spoonbills bent and swished their long flattened beaks through the shallows, collecting insects and small fish by touch. With their white necks and tutus of silky feathers shading from snow-white to rose-vermilion, they looked like a trio of long-legged classical ballerinas. Closer to the grassy shore a platoon of coots paddled by, and terns swooped over the water continually within a few feet of the visitors' cameras as if posing for us. Across the pond we could see white and blue herons fishing, and also several white ibis. When they were disturbed by what looked like a soggy floating log—but was in fact a large alligator—the ibis flew up into the air with what Audubon described as "loud hoarse cries resembling the syllables *hunk, hunk, hunk.*" A mangrove tree on the edge of the water was weighed down with a dozen black cormorants of the kind first discovered by Audubon, who also remarked on their unusual fishing methods. The cormorant's feathers are not coated with oil like those of most aquatic birds; when it plunges into a pond it becomes waterlogged. The resulting extra weight allows it to reach the depths where the fish hide; but it must dry off between dives as the ones we saw were doing, fanning the air with their high-shouldered wings like restless scarecrows.

After a picnic lunch we drove back into the park to visit the wet grasslands, the open spaces or glades of the Everglades. Here the shallow water pours steadily through miles of grass and sedge, creating a landscape that is green in some lights, coral, amethyst, or beige in others. From a distance it resembles a flooded carpet magnified many times. Seen close, this carpet turned out to be an elaborately woven Oriental rug. There are more than a hundred kinds of grass in the Everglades, and here they were stitched through with bright wildflowers: deep sapphire-blue and creamy-pink star-grass, the tiny gold daises of coreopsis, and many more. Small snakes whispered through the wet roots of the rough, three-edged sawgrass, and tiny spiders embroidered its stems. An apple snail, its shell shining like brown faille, crept along a leaf above the shallow ooze; it was hiding from the speck-



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ed yellow-legged limpkin bird, whose ong curved bill is better at winkling a nail out of its hiding place than anyhing you ever used in a Paris restauant. Nearby was the white porcelain aucer of an empty turtle shell with the lelicate skull picked clean beside it, narking the spot where some large ird had dined.

In the grasslands the layer of peat nd marl over the rock is usually so thin hat we could feel the underlying limetone through the clear, shallow runiing water. Here and there, though, he level of the rock rises or falls, and here are stands of tall trees. Depresions in the limestone are marked by ypress domes, groups of trees standng knee-deep in water, their ashyvhite branches trimmed with rusty ieedles like iron filings.

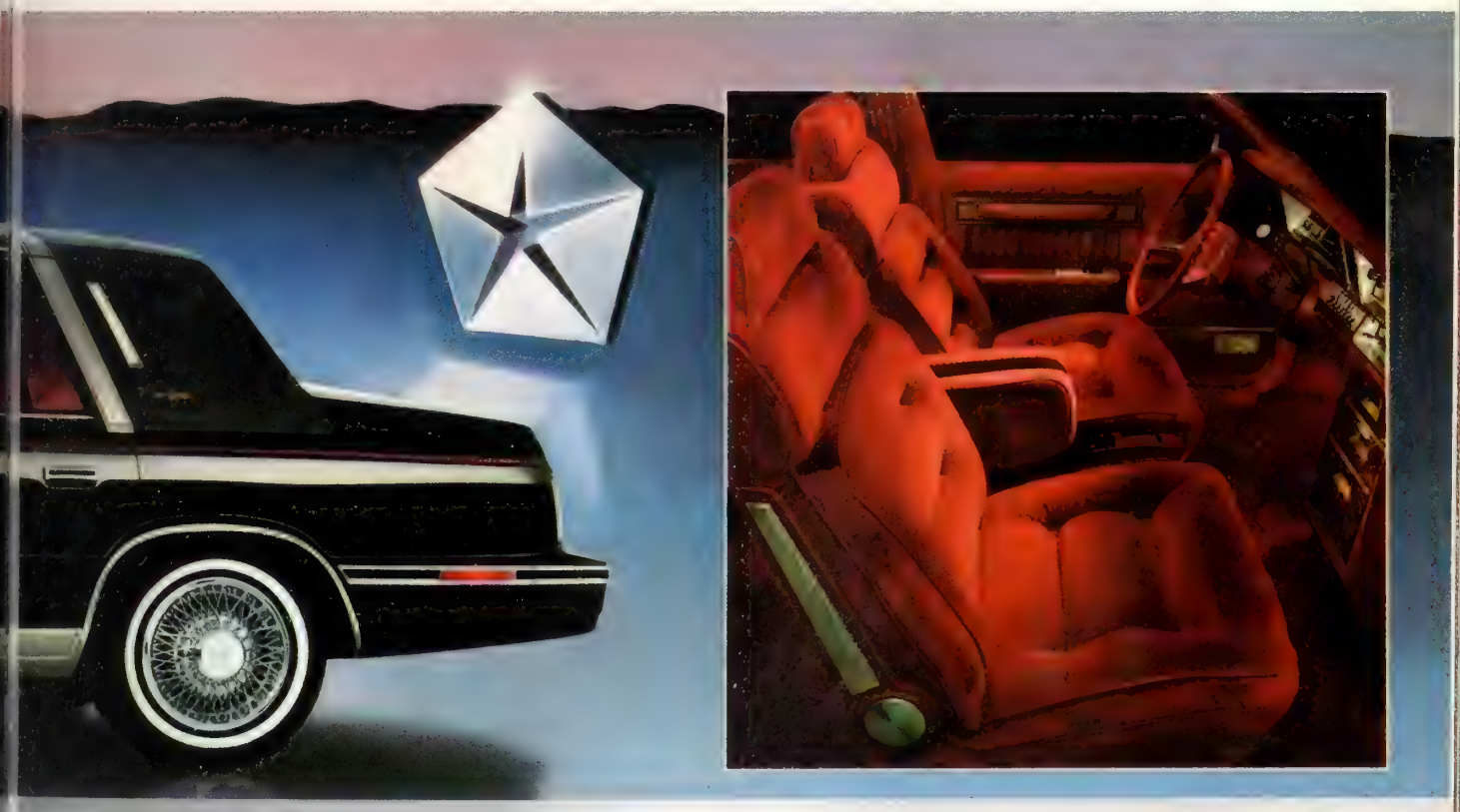
In the higher parts of the marsh vhere the ground is dry six months of he year there were stands of pine. Near them the grassland was dotted with holes the size of a can of tennis balls, half-filled with water. In each of them lived a crawfish. These small crustaceans would be safe from predatory birds, were it not for their natural tidiness. When a heron is hungry it drops a small lump of mud into one of the holes. The annoyed crayfish rises to the surface and throws the rubbish out its front door; if it is not quick enough, this becomes the last act of a zealous housekeeper.

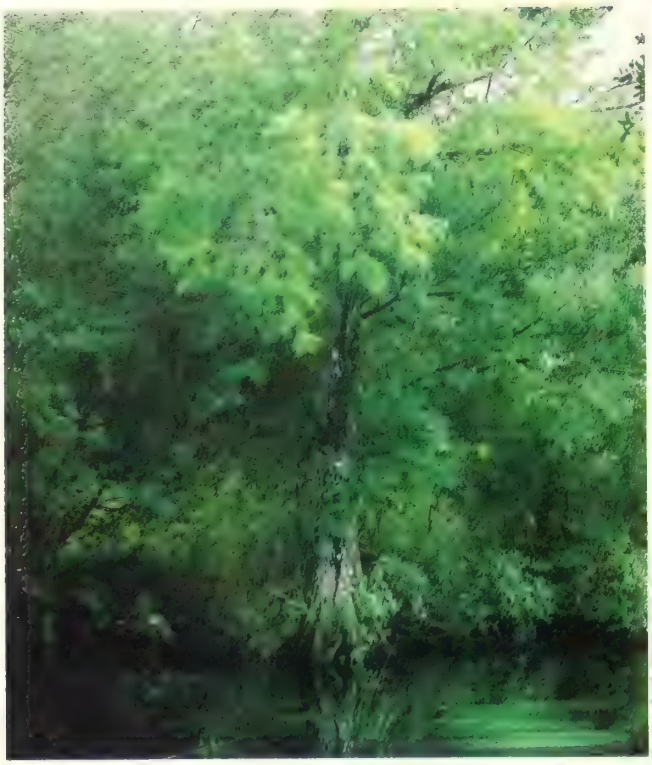
We could see all of these things, and much more, because we were able to leave the road and the established trails and wade right into the marsh. The naturalist who was our guide that afternoon, a tall and very pretty young woman called Bobbie Pettit in a Smokey-the-Bear hat, encouraged us to roam as far as we liked. Ms. Pettit, who had freckles and a single braid of golden-brown hair as thick as my wrist, explained that the more widely we spread out, the less chance there was of our doing harm to the environment.

The most memorable experience of our visit to the Everglades, however, was a dawn canoe trip on Florida Bay the last morning of our stay. As the sky lightened we paddled out from the marina into a silent world brocaded in a hundred different shades and textures of gray, from the oiled steel of the water to the feathery dove hues of clouds. Then the air began to flush with color, and the birds to wake. Soon the bay was full of the flapping of wings and the screams of gulls, ospreys, and the great bald eagles whose huge spiky nest we could see ahead of us. We paddled close to an islet on stilts like the one described by Elizabeth Bishop in her poem "Seascape":

. . . the weightless mangrove island
with bright green leaves edged
neatly with bird-droppings
like illuminations in silver . . .

As we rounded the island we came upon an *(Continued on page 40)*





The cypress tree found along eastern and western borders is a nesting place for wading birds.

(Continued from page 39) amazing sight: The whole southern side was thick with white pelicans, perhaps three dozen of them, roosting in the mangrove branches. The pelicans we had seen before hanging round the docks in Flamingo and Key West had always seemed rather low-brow birds, sinister as well as ridiculous. No doubt this view was influenced by Tennessee Williams's fantastic play *The Gnädiges Fräulein,* in which giant pelicans called "cocaloony birds" compete viciously for fish with the eponymous heroine and finally blind her.

But these fat white birds, asleep in the mangroves beneath a sky streaked with sugary, shredded pink clouds, seemed divine rather than demoniacal. The splash of our paddles woke them, and one by one they roused and flew off, just as Audubon said, "by easy flappings and sailings," soaring and tumbling like angelic clowns across an expanse of water that now resembled hammered silver, out into what Elizabeth Bishop quite rightly described as the celestial seascape of Florida Bay.

We left the Everglades hoping to come back another year and stay longer, but anxious about what we would find when we returned. Everglades National Park is threatened today from many directions. The growing urban population of South Florida endangers its supply of fresh water from Lake Okeechobee, and farmlands near the borders of the park leak dangerous chemical fertilizers and pesticides into both air and water. If this unspoiled wilderness, the only one of its kind in the world, is to survive, all of us must work to protect it. □

Alison Lurie is Professor of English at Cornell University and author of six novels as well as The Language of Clothes *(Random House).*

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HE KNEW EVEN THEN

From Eton to New Bond Street, grand eccentricity is Christopher Gibbs's stock in trade

By Nancy Richardson



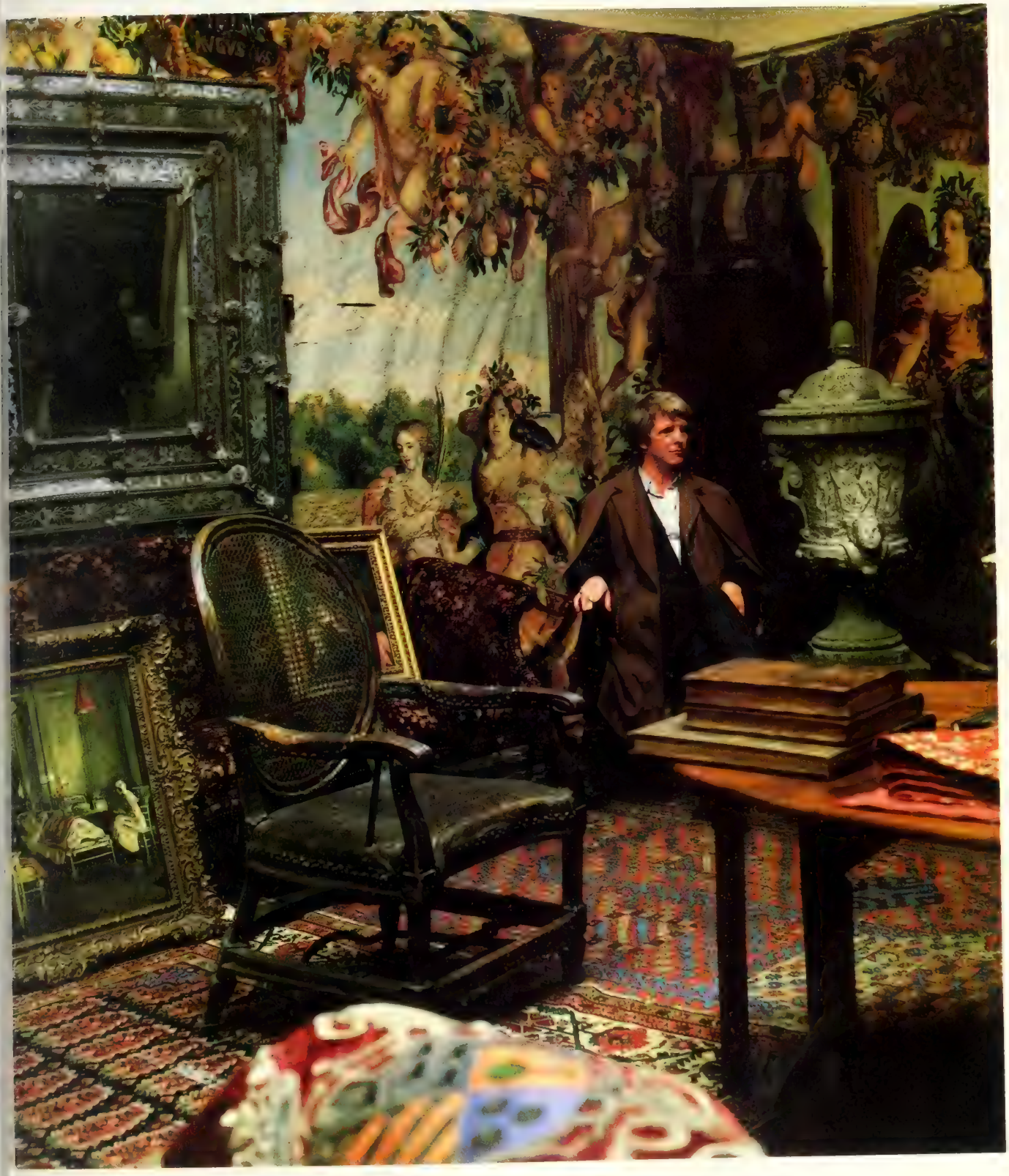




English houses have always had a romantic, even exotic, appeal for Americans. Henry James's novels provide detailed descriptions of big country-house libraries furnished with books and shadows, of well-designed gardens where the air is fat and glistening with moisture, and of the wrenching sensuality of a moment when the sound of voices unexpectedly pierces the cool quiet of a stone-floored hall, and mingled scents of flowers, trees, and damp earth billow in behind. An American's response to these early-20th-century images is based on the nostalgia they evoke more than on actual architecture or decoration. For the English it's this mood more than anything physical that they seek to build into their surroundings. Unlike us, they tend to keep the furniture—even unpretentious things—given by their parents. And they have firmly in mind that it takes far more than money to make a house or a room a success. At the moment this romantic view of the past translates into an almost avant-garde fascination with rooms of the 19th and early 20th centuries—the colonial furniture of the high empire in India; sturdy, rather baroque Edwardian pieces; 80-year-old carpet-covered armchairs or frayed buttoned-leather chairs found in men's clubs; and any furniture that in the last two centuries happened to look like a small building. As these elements come together to furnish an English room, the result is often a mood of deliberately shabby gentility, a tangy, insistent reminder of the world that James described. The center—both in terms of sensibility, goods, and stuffs—for such romantically arranged quarters is London, but there are numbers of Americans who are bringing a version of this look home. One of their major sources is an antiques dealer called Christopher Gibbs.

Christopher Gibbs's shop sits in a couple of skylit and somehow Pre-Raphaelite rooms down a corridor that leads in from New Bond Street. To the left and right, doorways open into shops where some of the rarest and most expensive things in the world are sold. Not that Christopher Gibbs doesn't offer some dazzling William Kent gilt console tables from time to time, an important bust of Mme. de Staël, or 17th-century Brussels tapestries of the seasons in designs and colors so appealing that you want them even though tapestries generally leave you cold. Entering the first big room, which is slightly damp and chilly as though it were an undressed orangerie tacked onto the end of a country house, a visitor comes across a bold arrangement of big-scale furniture of every period and country that somehow seems to be neither English nor noticeably eclectic simply because of the unifying eye of the man who bought the pieces. An overriding first reaction is one of wanting to live in rooms arranged like this. Partly it's because of the skylight, partly because of the tapestry that hangs in folds against plain walls. The rest is the casual propping or leaning of mirrors, pictures, engravings—framed or unframed—against other elements. Everything in the room, whether English, European, Moslem, or Oriental, has a certain architectural quality to it, and a robustness. Gibbs himself is *en suite* with his possessions. He is strongly made, moves somewhat like a graceful bear, and is dressed in clothes that have the air of someone else having broken them in for him.

"I've always liked a good 18th-century Gothic chimney piece or a Palladian secretaire with Corinthian capitals," he begins, "any piece of furniture that looks as if it had been drawn by someone *(Continued on page 44)*



Above: Christopher Gibbs in the main room of his shop at 118 New Bond St., London. A painting is reflected in a 16th-c. Venetian mirror hung over one of six 17th-c. Brussels tapestries that line the room. *Opposite page, left:* 17th-c. Flemish frame in ebony inlaid with brass and etched mother-of-pearl; *center* bust of Mme. de Staël on an English giltwood table; *right* one of a pair of 18th-c. English oak benches.

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Detail of 1830s Russian chair

(*Continued from page 42*) who knew about architecture, whether it's a piece of a frieze or a stone bust that originally went well in a handsomely proportioned room. I've sometimes offered really beautiful things like French 18th-century bronze-mounted furniture inlaid with a marquetry of precious woods that now sells for so much. But I like 'nice' things as well as 'good' things. Nice things are pleasant to live with, well-designed without being meticulously well-wrought in the way jewelry is as the result of very exacting craftsmanship. I'm not interested in soup plates inlaid with three colors of gold or a chair leg that's been carved within an inch of its life. I feel that people of taste in any era have always liked simple things. There's a wonderful Chinese book written by a scholar in 1300 which describes what good porcelain, bronzes, or paintings ought to have looked like and why. The point is that it's never had anything to do with having 300 pearls inlaid somewhere. People will find virtue in a desk or table because six people have gone blind to make it and precious materials have been used. The idea is that the buyer of such a thing is getting his money's worth because of the man-hours that went into it. Collectors of contemporary furniture reject that attitude, but perhaps they've gone too far."

Christopher Gibbs has been thinking about what he likes for a long time. "When I arrived at Eton at age 13, instead of playing games, which never amused me particularly, I spent my afternoons in the town looking through antiques shops. I spent a lot of time with a Mrs. Cox, an American in her 70s who had a shop full of Regency lacquer furniture, painted chests, whole rooms of Chinese wallpaper, and anything else that was tremendously decorative. She would often make new things out of bits and pieces—legs from one table, a top from another. It was always an inspired marriage, however, never anything trite, and it always did more for both parties than if they'd been left alone. She'd cover chairs in an old material she'd rescued, a frayed but dignified damask, a silk velvet mostly worn through, a faded piece of needlework, or sunbleached chintz. She jollied around the countryside in the back of a lorry seated on a throne of sorts in which she was lifted out at the end of rutted drives into an old house which was about to be dismantled. She always came back with wonderful things. That was fun and I learned a great deal from her—things like you don't have to be rich to have incredible possessions and an incredible house, which still doesn't mean I like filth or chairs with springs coming out. But patches and chips are all right. I do like clean linen, a nice clean floor, and a fire in the fireplace.

"It was at Eton that I began to buy things. My choices were rather wayward and eclectic and I would keep them in my room for a time and then sell them back to other antiques dealers. Sometimes I'd take something from home—a silver saltcellar perhaps—and trade it for a thing I wanted more. Living at Eton was of itself formative. Some of the architecture was very good, and I got used to living with it. There was good Tudor, Gothic of all kinds, some genteel 18th century and some grand 18th century. There were also some ponderous early-20th-century buildings with cut stone and swags that cost a lot of money. Eventually I got kicked out, having spent much too much time in the antiques shops and not enough time working, and I went to another school which was bang next door to an enormous Norman abbey in Hampshire. That was very exciting; I'd never seen grand Romanesque architecture before. I also went to see Winchester and other medieval buildings nearby. This school was for boys who had been kicked out of good schools and it was full of flotsam of one kind or another and there were flotsam teachers as well. It turned out to be very interesting because I encountered different kinds (*Continued on page 47*)

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English 18th-c.
painted hall chair.

(Continued from page 44) of literature—I had a master who lent me things like Huysmans, Henry James, and M.R. James. M.R. James was the son of a parson and a great scholar of paleography. He wrote wonderful eerie English ghost stories which he used to read to the boys and frighten them to death. They were all about archaeology and architecture and they described rooms and buildings in the minutest detail—what the bricks were like, how they were laid, the cornices, what statue was standing in the corner of the library and what the handle of the silver knife looked like as it sat in the bottom of the well."

Not long after, Gibbs was sent to Tours to learn French. There he encountered French houses, the 20th century, and the avant-garde. On weekends he and Henry Geldzahler, then just out of Yale, hitchhiked together to Paris and wandered through Sylvia Beach's bookshop, read Geldzahler's copy of *The Catcher in the Rye*, discovered Matisse, visited the Louvre, the Musée de l'Art Moderne, and the antiques shops. "In my Eton days I saw only English and Italian things. In my family the idea of a grand picture didn't include much more than a Romney or a Gainsborough. So when I was in France I encountered all sorts of things for the first time—old châteaus with pretty painted furniture covered in toile de Jouy, parquet de Versailles, Chinese pots everywhere, and tatty old velvet. It wasn't at all show-off. What doesn't seem right to me even today is the sort of French furniture that's been regilded and restored until it looks extremely new."

Back in London in the late '50s and after a stint with a small auction house, Gibbs did up some offices in Biedermeier furniture and Pre-Raphaelite paintings—both categories that were little looked at in those days. Afterwards, in a then out-of-the-way but now fashionable enclave of antiques shops in Islington, he opened an antiques shop that was to draw sophisticated buyers. "When the shop opened, I had the most beautiful Chinese picture I've ever owned—a 15th-century picture of a mastiff bound by gold chains to a scarlet post. It was in a Ming frame of scarlet lacquer nearly 10 feet high."

Soon after came a new shop in Chelsea, and decorators like Tom Parr and David Hicks, who had come occasionally in Islington, stopped by more often. The move to New Bond Street came in 1972 after American collectors such as Paul Mellon began to buy from Gibbs. More recently there has been a steady stream of American clients. Last summer a lot of people in London were talking about an 18-foot-square, 19th-century Aubusson with a large Indian elephant and giant foliage, which had just come into Christopher Gibbs's shop. "The colors were different from an 18th-century Aubusson—they were rich and autumnal—browns and greens; then orange, sour raspberry, a little scarlet, an odd turquoise, and some singing, strong pale blues," he remembers. It was a typical Gibbs find—something unexpected, strong, handsome.

Soon it was gone and a pair of high-backed painted and carved Gothic hall chairs in. Like no Gothic hall chairs you've seen. Now there's an 1830s Russian chair with no back and no seat. It looks like sculpture with two giltwood monopodial lions that form the front legs and part of the arms. All by itself the chair would lend a room a desirable nostalgic air and provide the excuse for the new owner, like Gibbs himself, to conjure up the exotic house for which it was originally made. □



BRACELETS FOR BULLETS

Patriotic Prussian ladies gave up their gold to defeat Napoleon and wore Berlin Iron in its place

By Vivienne Becker

Jewels of little or no intrinsic value are often more evocative of their age than gem-set heirlooms. So it is with Berlin Iron, the lacy wrought-iron jewelry made in the first half of the 19th century. This black-matte jewelry tells the social and political story of its era: industrial growth, war and patriotism, economic vagaries, and the mourning ritual.

Most probably, Berlin Iron jewelry originated at Gleiwitz in Silesia out of the Prussian prowess for fine precision casting, or as a sideline for armorers. The first factory producing cast-iron jewelry opened in Berlin in 1804. Known as the Royal Berlin Factory, jewelry was just one part of its varied output, along with small accessories, watches, clavichord keys, card cases, purses.

The Royal Berlin Factory had only two years to experiment before Napoleon marched into the city. In his usual acquisitive manner, he took a fancy to this Berlin specialty, and whisked the casts back to France, where work apparently continued. The heyday of Berlin iron jewelry came when the country was fighting its War of Liberation (1812–1814) against the little tyrant. As part of the war effort, the wealthy were asked to donate their gold wedding rings and diamond jewels, and in return, as a receipt for their generosity, they were given a piece of home-produced iron jewelry. Unfair exchange you might think, but patriotism, then as now, demands a high price. The jewels were often inscribed *Gold gab ich für Eisen* ("I gave my gold for iron") or *Unvergesslich* ("Lest we forget") or with an emotional motto about the fatherland. Many were dated to commemorate battles. Small iron crosses, proudly displaying a head of Frederick of Prussia, were especially popular.

A lacy bracelet with gold set on polished steel as a centerpiece design.

The fashion did not end with the war, and trinkets without somber sentiments continued to be made for almost another 50 years. Exported from Prussia all over the world, they were regarded as technological curiosities as much as decorative accessories. The classical designs of these early days of production, from 1804 to about 1820, are the most sought-after. Strongly influenced by the classical atmosphere, necklaces of openwork reliefs were strung with cameo cutout scenes and little formal flower groups. Each plaque had a beaded or milled edge, and the best pieces, now extremely rare, were rimmed with a line of gold. Proud profiles of cameos were set on gleaming polished blue-gray steel backgrounds, often framed with curled tendrils of milled wire, or preferably fixed on a band of woven iron mesh, the solid reliefs contrasting with the flexible ribbon. It's hard to believe it's the same material. These pieces are particularly successful for their symbolism of the strength and beauty of classical heroism.

In Paris, the classical elegance of the black-matte jewelry (obtained by giving the metal a coating of black lacquer) was welcomed when society was plunged into mourning after the assassination of the duc de Berry in February 1820. By 1827, iron jewelry was all the rage and there were several manufacturers in Paris, among them a M. Dumas, and Caqué, an engraver at the Paris mint, famed for classical designs. The French could turn out iron jewelry at such a competitive price that foreigners were forced to lower their prices. It is not easy, or for that matter important, to distinguish between French and German work. To confuse matters still further, one of the best designers of the iron jewelry in Berlin had the very French *(Continued on page 52)*



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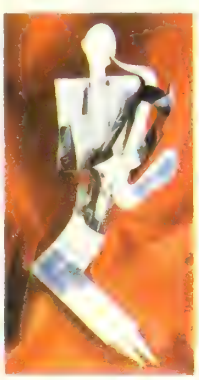
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From Syrie Maugham's white-white rooms to grey flannel walls and other one-color concepts.

It's not only the so-called major arts that reflect the tone and tenor of their times. When Syrie Maugham's white-white rooms appeared in the twenties—their "pickled white" furniture placed against spare white walls, the settings spotted with white feathers, white seashells, and white everything, as well as with chrome and mirrors—they were as much a statement of the soul of their era as were cubism and atonal music. The now-famous postwar mood seemed to embrace all manner of things from shingled hair to *le jazz hot*. The times they had a-changed indeed. And a 'new decor' held sway. Again.



Mrs. Maugham probably didn't think of herself as either a revolutionary or a social reporter. Her sensibilities (like those of any good designer-decorator in any era) were clearly attuned to the past (and what was wrong with it) as well as to the exciting present (and how best to live in it).

Her spare, uncluttered rooms with their spare and uncluttered use of color were partly a turning away from the formality and heaviness of the preceding Edwardian and Victorian years. But they were, even more, a looking forward to the simpler, easier, and lighter standards that suddenly, it seemed, had now emerged in every aspect of life and held sway internationally. (An intriguing footnote to Mrs. Maugham's celebrity as a designer is the persistent reappearance of the literary connection in the decorating arena. Before she made her mark as a decorator, Mrs. Maugham was very much a member of the international literary community via her extravagantly successful writing husband. Through the years, literary lionessess—Mrs. Trollope, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Edith Wharton—often employed their insights to affect the look of real houses and rooms as well as to comment on what went on in fictional houses and rooms.)

Designers seem to have a tradition for periodically cleaning things up, throwing out the past and bringing in the present. Minimalism follows modernism. High-tech follows Bauhaus. "Take everything out!" is a recurring designer's battle cry. Yet, people being people (and designers being people, too), "Put things back in!" is another battle cry—of which the much-vaunted Post-Modernism of today is a lively example.

And even though a room completely swathed in grey flannel may well be as oppressively self-conscious as one thoroughly bedecked in flowering chintzes, the idea of a carefully controlled color palette appears to be one whose strength prevails in all sorts of eras and for all sorts of decorating styles.

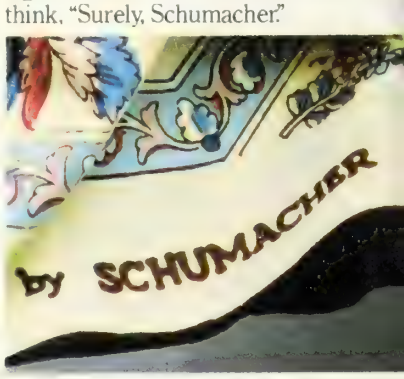


The very 1980's townhouse sitting-room shown here, designed by John Robert Moore, is a contemporary example. Although the room is as monochromatic as any period Maugham, there's an easy up-to-the-minute vivacity about it. This result is achieved by the subtle play of texture against texture, as well as tone against tone. The imported cut-velvet covering the couch and the tussah silk with random-dyed-warp on the ottoman (fabrics shown, above) are examples of this latter-day ease and compatibility.

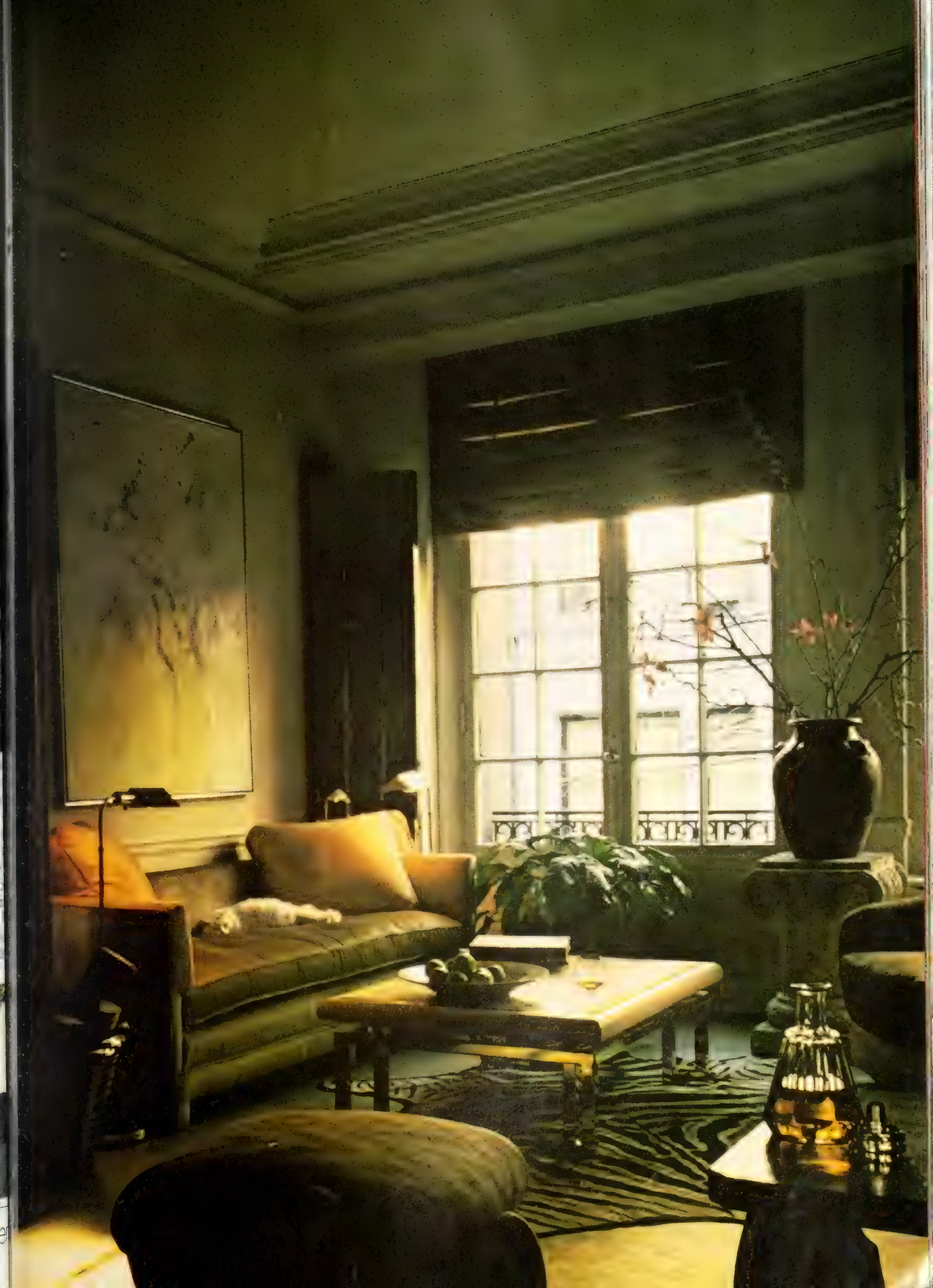
Returning for a moment to Syrie Maugham, the tufted armless easy chair, (shown at top, right) was designed by Mrs. Maugham, and is another of her prescient decorating ideas. The chair, from a private collection, is here upholstered in a slubbed 100% DuPont Dacron® polyester that no doubt would have appealed to Mrs. Maugham for its good looks. Its equally great practicality is a decidedly more modern yet equally appealing attribute.



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Schumacher's Illustrated Notes on 20th Century Taste. One of a se



(Continued from page 48) name of Devaranne. Probably a transplanted Frenchman, Siméon Pierre Devaranne was trained as a goldsmith, and showed some of the most remarkable Berlin Iron at the Great Exhibition of 1851. A good number of pieces have a signature, usually the mark of the manufacturer or foundry: Geiss, Schott of Ilsenburg am Harz, or Lehmann of Berlin. Schott was responsible for a pair of fans, light as carved ivory, destined for the 1862 exhibition, one of which is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

As the Neoclassical influence dwindled, Berlin Iron was given a new look, developing into exquisite miniature wrought-iron work like grilles or gates. Restrained and formal trelliswork designs gave way to luxuriant flowers, fruit, and cupids of Victorian romanticism and naturalism.

For the French market or Francophiles, iron jewels often had the fleur-de-lis motif, while English tastes plumped for endless trailing vine and ivy leaves, wave and dolphin designs, butterflies with gossamer wings. Dramatic long earrings to grace a white and slender neck dropped to the shoulders with scrolled and pierced feather-light cages. The architectural nature of iron jewels lent itself to the wave of Gothic revival that took over Victorian design, encouraged by Pugin's ideas and a romantic view of the Middle Ages. Miniature Gothic follies were outlined with scaled-down pointed arches, and filled with medieval traceries and trefoils. Many were purely exhibition pieces, and it may well have been the overzealous spirit of the exhibition age that sounded the death knell for Berlin Iron. Convoluted Gothic was at times overdone, and Berlin Iron went the way of so many overused fashions, victims of Victorian caprice.

The quality of the pieces varies a great deal. Some of the later pieces tended to be stamped out of thin sheets of metal rather than cast. They look flimsy, lack definition, and the backs are concave, not solid and flat. The main skill lay in the casting technique and mold-making, which the French so much admired in the German work.

Collectors wistfully recall being able to find Berlin Iron jewelry for $7 to $15. Now these pieces might cost as much as $750 to $1,500. Collectors also complain that good early pieces rarely come onto the market. Rings are especially rare; Neoclassical cameos and signed pieces are all very desirable. Prices are relatively high for these examples, but probably realistic in terms of workmanship, historical value, and rarity, since Berlin Iron was neglected and underpriced for so long. □

Vivienne Becker is a jewelry historian and the author of Antique and Twentieth-Century Jewelry.

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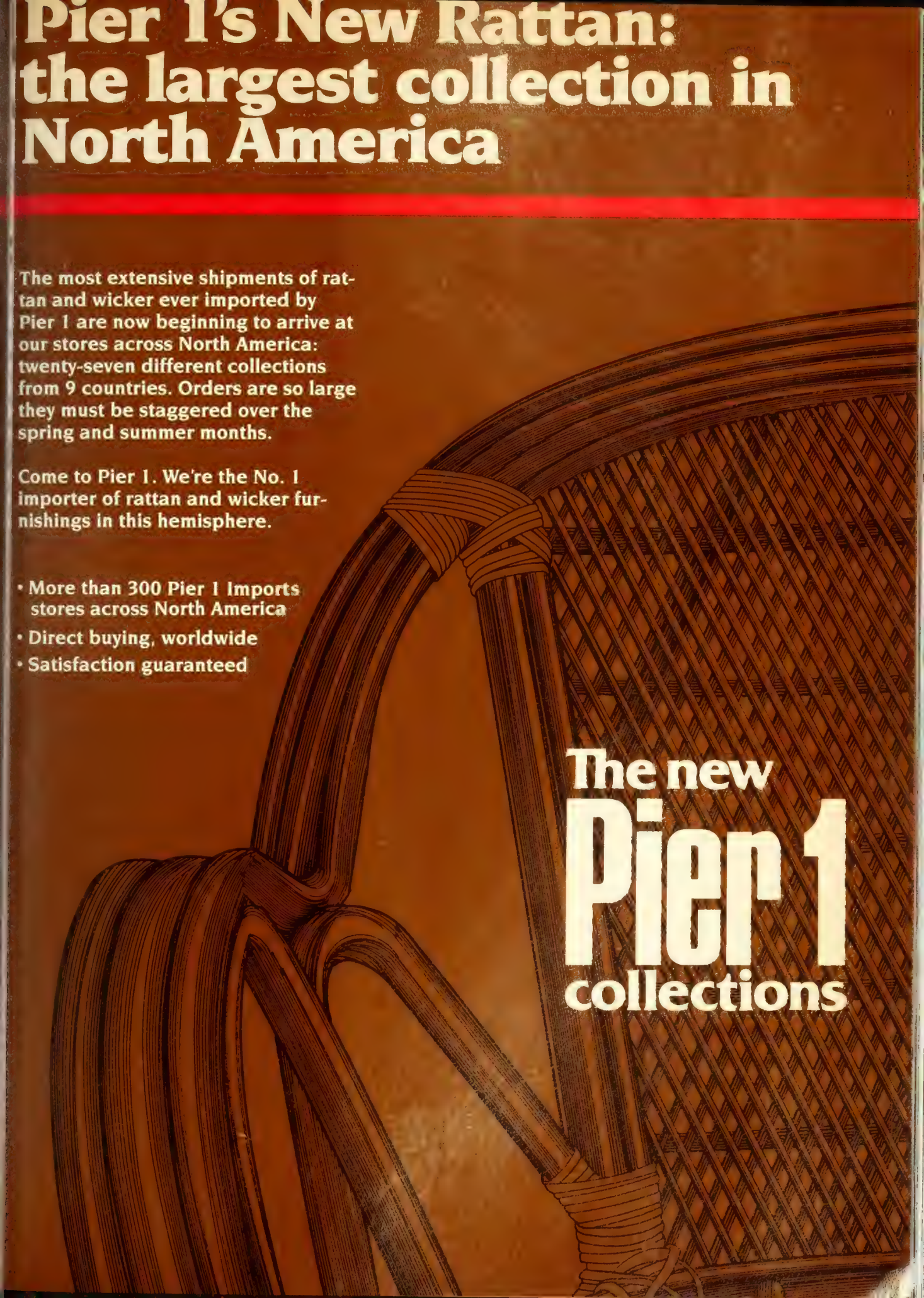
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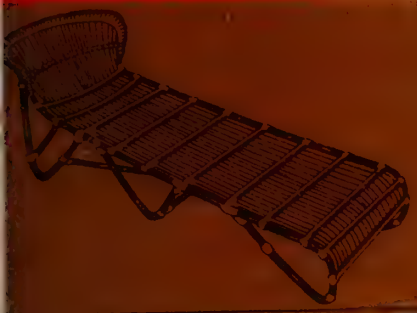


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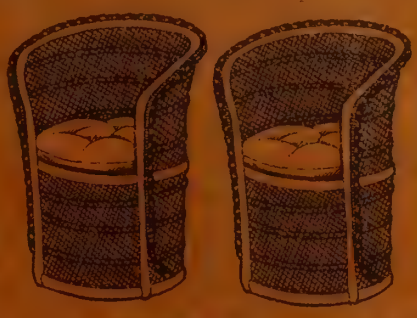
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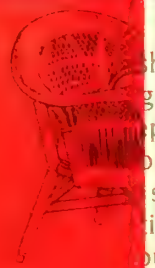
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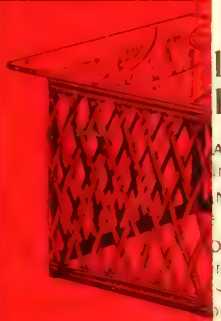


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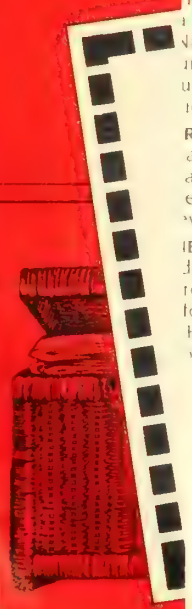
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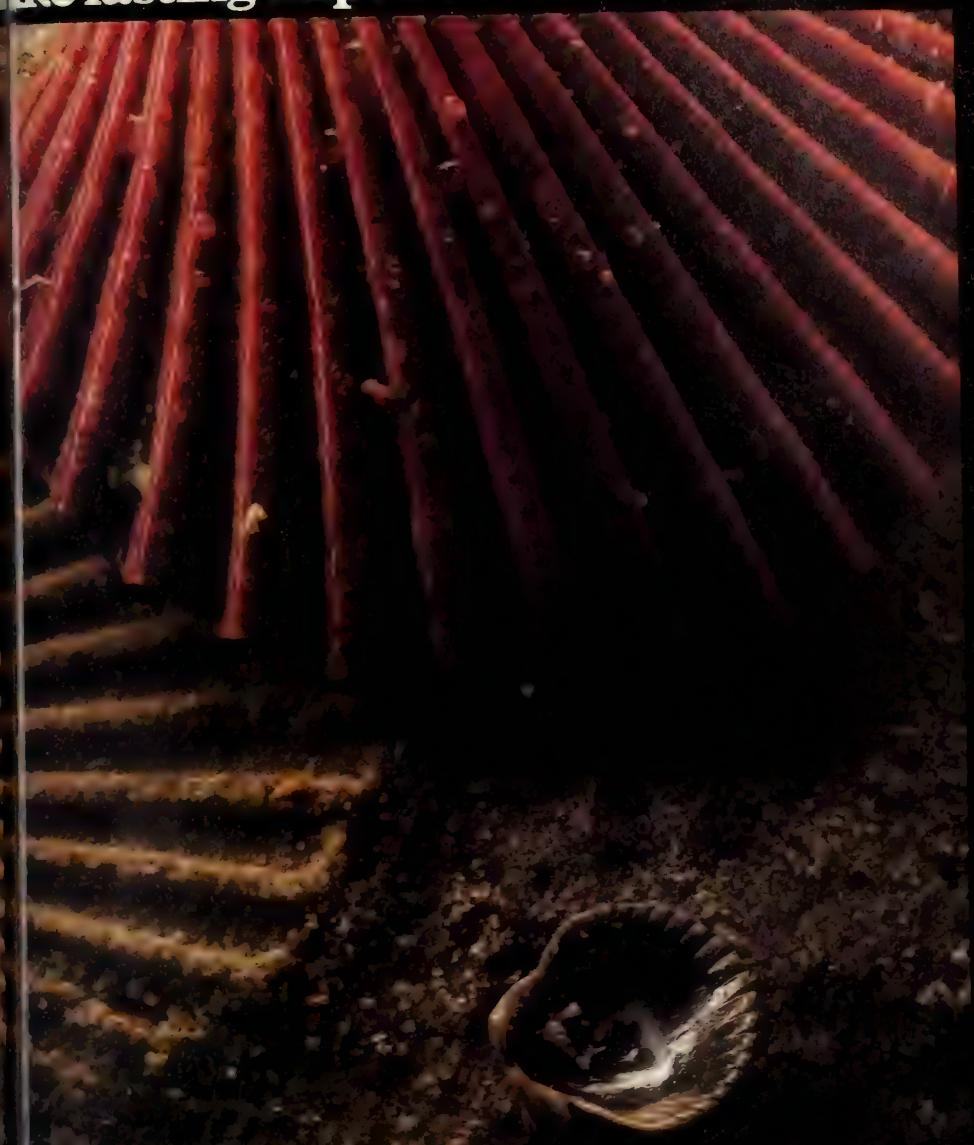
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AUDUBON PLACE

In contrast to the heady exoticism of the French Quarter, this private street in New Orleans has a quietly "American" quality

By Christopher Gray

Lester J. Lautenschlaeger graduated from high school in 1921, and he decided to stay home in New Orleans for college. One day that summer he went to register at Tulane. "I got off the streetcar and walked through a big gate up to a large building I thought was the administration. A butler answered the doorbell, and I said I had come to register for classes at the university. He told me politely that what I thought was the registrar's office was in fact a house. 'Well,' I said, 'I would surely like to live here some day.' The butler, whose name was Clarke, said, 'Well, sir, then just maybe I'll work for you when you do!'



The 1894 arched entrance, with number 2 in the background

Twenty-five years later, Lester Lautenschlaeger came back to the house with his wife, Lizzette, and bought it, and Clarke worked for them for many years. The Lautenschlaegers are still there, just inside the big gate, in house number 1 on New Orleans's magnificent Audubon Place.

Audubon Place was established in 1893 when W.A.S. Wheeler, a local insurance man put a group of St. Louis investors on to the sale of a large tract of land opposite Audubon Park on upper St. Charles Avenue. The area was ripe for development—the Garden District downtown had filled up, the St. Charles streetcars were just about to change over from mule to electric power, and Tulane University was relocating to an adjacent plot from its crowded downtown quarters.



Number 9: late Victorian eclectic

The St. Louisians meant to establish a residence park like the "places" of St. Louis and other large cities in the North and West, and indeed the plan of Audubon Place is almost identical to that of Portland or Westmoreland places in St. Louis—a large, parklike boulevard flanked by generous building lots, with gates at either end. Compared to those of St. Louis, property restrictions were mild: single-family occupancy, houses to cost at least $7,000 to build, and a homeowners' association—the Audubon Place Commission—to care for the street and collect dues.

Even a family that had come to New Orleans as long ago as the turn of the 19th century was considered *arriviste* by the remaining Creole families in the city, who were hanging on to their old residences downtown along Esplanade Avenue. And Audubon Place was considered "American" in the same way. "I'm sure a lot of older families thought it was nouveau riche," says a New Orleanian whose family was one of the first to build on Audubon Place and who lived there as a boy in the 1930s. Instead of attached houses, open sewers, courtyard living, and the noise and smells of the Vieux Carré, Audubon Place was an ideal of the new City Beautiful movement—large lots and yards, freestanding houses, commercial use prohibited.

The French ways of Esplanade Avenue couldn't survive intact against Americans on the move, and since 1900 Audubon Place has remained the "best" street to live on in New Orleans. The families in the beginning were representative of the American capitalist presence: the McLellans, Hobsons, and Ellises (cotton), the Legendres (coffee)—French descendants who succumbed—Augustin Wheeler (banking), brother of W.A.S. Wheeler, and Rice (hardware), all moving up from lower St. Charles Avenue or the Garden District as they became more and more crowded. Once the streetcars were electrified, downtown commuting from Audubon Place was easy, and the relocation of Tulane to the area created a new uptown center of development—a residence park next door to an educational park both across the street from a city park—the antithesis of the declining Vieux Carré.

Architecturally, the houses were also American, replacing the models of the French Quarter attached house with an (*Continued on page 64*)

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"Audubon Place gives a firm sense of New Orleans—the flatness of a delta city, the smell of sweet olive, the humidity of the Gulf air"

(*Continued from page 62*) enclosed center court and the suburban, plantation-inspired raised cottage with a center hall. The early group of houses are large-scaled, late-Victorian buildings with Classical ornament, although later styles included distinct Colonial, Georgian, and Renaissance revivals. The ensemble is rather placid, with no one house standing out distinctly from its neighbors—except perhaps the flamboyant pink Spanish Colonial number 27, all the way at the end toward Freret Street, one of the last lots to be improved.

The early minute books of the Commission indicate less calm than the architecture would suggest. Some property owners criticized and in 1905 had removed the big chain at the gatehouses, which served as a visual cue that the street was private, and then the big iron crown on the arch was found inelegant and taken off. Plantings were a frequent topic of meetings, not just the seasonal plantings of winter grass or a few thousand pansy plants, but also the continual delays in finding the correct oak trees as well as hardy-enough palms—freezes seemed to be killing each new planting. Twenty-two died in 1902.

By 1910, most of the 28 lots were at last owner-occupied, and since that time fortune has smiled on Audubon Place. There have been no periods of decline, and it is now almost a caricature of "the best street in town"—in few other cities are the largest houses also located on a private street in such a desirable location.

"To me, this is simply the best place to live in New Orleans," says Nancy Steck, who describes herself as a newcomer after 18 years. "It's a way of life that most people in America don't know anymore. My children are grown now, but I'd love for them to live on Audubon Place, too, and I know they'd love to. That's one thing about New Orleans—people come back, especially if they've grown up here."

The aspect of return is a constant in Audubon Place, for many families have occupied several or successive houses. The Legendres (5, 7, and 12) and the Mansons (4 and 6) were multiple householders by 1910, a pattern repeated in recent years by the Alexanders, who have owned three houses, and the Colemans, who have owned four. But, interestingly, there has been no recorded intermarriage on the street, perhaps because the 27 houses have created too intimate a social pool in which to navigate.

Samuel G. Robinson has a unique perspective on Audubon Place, being the last descendant of the original builder-occupant families to leave the street, in 1982. His grandfather, Charles W. Robinson, founded the family lumber business in 1893, the year Audubon Place was conceived, and built number 26 around 1905.



Number 27: "Mediterranean Gothic"

"Pictures show that in the old days, before I was born, the kids had ponies and goats and goat carts. There were chickens in the backyard to lay eggs. When we were children we played hockey on roller skates there—the palm fronds made good hockey sticks. All the kids in the neighborhood would come over to play on the street."

What made the last original family leave Audubon Place? "It seemed time to go, not only because our children had grown but also because it was a big house to keep up. And we felt that the street was becoming a fortress—the locked gates, the extra police. It didn't seem right to me anymore. I'd like to live in a house, not a fortress."

Ironically, the scheme of Audubon Place is not well designed to enforce privacy. There is no fence along St. Charles Avenue, and the gatehouses connected by the iron arch boldly lettered "Audubon Place" seem like an entry portal to some giant public festival ground. Furthermore, the gatehouses are so far apart that actual gates would be difficult to install. With the chain that once served as a gate gone, the guard in front always looks a bit helpless, like a traffic cop in the middle of an eight-lane highway. The result is that as many people jog, sneak, drive, or wander through Audubon Place as are warned away, and the presence of the guard does take something away from the easy grace of the street. Surely the original homeowners did not have to post signs like the present ones, which gravely prohibit "unauthorized walking."

Authorized or not, the pedestrian going down Audubon Place today will get a firm sense of New Orleans—the flatness of a delta city, the humidity of the Gulf air, the smell of sweet olive, the long streets perpendicular to the Mississippi River (following the ancient boundaries of the plantations). If it is "a bit overwhelming," as the resident of an adjacent street says, it is also the elegant legacy of an expansive port economy, a later version of the great houses of New Bedford or Nantucket. The private ownership of the street has spared Audubon Place the spots of abandonment or new construction that mar St. Charles Avenue. As Nancy Steck says, "Audubon Place and its big old houses have a charm that makes for a special quality of life. In New Orleans, and certainly in Audubon Place, we do have that." □


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THE PLEASURES OF LUXURY

Mica Ertegun and Chessy Rayner of Mac II decorate an apartment for international collectors

BY ALICE GORDON PHOTOGRAPHS BY HORST







Their precious belongings range from an 8th-century Chinese Tang Dynasty horse to two Art Deco chairs for their little dog, which is to say that the owners of this extravagantly spacious New York City penthouse apartment have a sense of humor and perspective as well as of beauty and luxury. "What's most wonderful about them," says Mica Ertegun of Mac II, who decorated the apartment with partner Chessy Rayner, "is that none of their priceless objects is behind glass. They know these things were made to be used, and they use them—constantly."

Mac II has worked with the owners in decorating homes elsewhere in the world. Each reflects its milieu, and the same is true of this apartment. "New York requires a place where you can feel cozy," says Mrs. Ertegun, "and to them that meant using a lot of their English furniture. The lady of the house knows exactly what she wants. She has an incredibly organized mind, a tremendous sense of comfort for both herself *(Text continued on page 74)*

Preceding pages: In the living room, examples of a Russian-silver collection are displayed on an ormolu-mounted *bois-satiné bureau plat* by Charles Cressent, ca. 1735. *Right:* Manet's *Portrait de Guillaudin à Cheval,* 1870. *Above:* English globes made in 1807 greet visitors in the gallery; rug is a 16th-century Herat.







Van Dongen's *Femme Couchée*, 1909, hangs over the fireplace. Cabinet is 18th-century Chinese. Giltwood bench, ca. 1745, sofa, and pillows are covered in refurbished 18th-century crewelwork.

and for people around her, and an excellent sense of space, which is really very rare."

Indeed, to make such a large space cozy was a challenging task, but one met with confidence and skill. To begin, Mac II virtually gutted the apartment, leaving only the dining room intact. To make the broad library, they tore down a wall between two smaller rooms. In the rear of the apartment, they added bathrooms and abundant closet space and made the master bedroom first smaller, then bigger, then smaller again—until it was pronounced just right. For the couple's cherished cook, who requires privacy to concentrate on her innovative concoctions, a wall was put up between the butler's pantry and kitchen.

These structural changes taken care of, attention was focused on details—some big, some small, all integral to the envisioned unrestrained utilization of the space. One living-room wall is mostly recessed windows; Mac II mirrored it all—the recesses, the custom-made shutters, and the radiator covers with an Art Deco look. Now, whether the shutters are open by day to the lush views of treetops or by night to Manhattan city lights, the outdoors can be found at a glance. When the shutters are closed, the already huge living room takes on the aura of a grand salon. This was where the couple wanted to hang their sumptuous Van Dongen painting, and Mac II determined the size of the marble-and-brass fireplace accordingly. The last major project in the room was the painting of the walls. "It required layers and *layers* of lacquer," says Mrs. Rayner, "and sanding between each coat. We had to guard the doors against even a single speck of dust." The glass-smooth golden walls perfected, down went the Mouhteshan Kashan rug that covers almost the entire floor *(Text continued on page 80)*



Eighteenth-century pine paneling from an old English house was carefully fitted in the library, where the couple spend much of their time. In windows are sculptures by Francisco Zuñiga (left) and Marino Marini. Bookcases display rare editions and 12 Louis XVI Caesars. Faded-mahogany Carlton House writing table, ca. 1790, holds Fabergé candlesticks, Whieldon ceramic lions, a late-18th-century ormolu mechanical waterfall clock, probably by Matthew Boulton. Tiny Art Deco chairs were a whimsical purchase for the dog, but she prefers the linen-covered armchairs.







Left: On 18th-century English dining table is Worchester scrolling-vine china, ca. 1835, painted in puce and gilt; menu holders by Fabergé. George III chandelier came from Boscobel, Garrison, New York. In windows are 19th-century Chinese cloisonné cranes, between them a Chinese porcelain temple jar of the Kangxi period. *Above:* Detail of one of 20 red-japanned George II chairs, ca. 1745, attributed to Giles Grendey





The extensive china collection includes Gardner Order of St. Vladimir, made by an Englishman in Moscow, ca. 1785. When not brought out for a dinner party, it is prominently displayed in the gallery in two English Regency mahogany breakfronts, ca. 1810. The couple believes in using all their valuable objects rather than keeping them under lock and key.

(rugs are the collecting soft spot of the man of the house), the substantial aqua-satin chairs; a sofa, two 18th-century scroll-arm benches, and plump pillows were covered in 18th-century crewelwork, around which a crew of meticulous seamstresses appliquéd a new beige-linen background because the original fabric was deteriorating. Throughout the room are bibelots from all over the world.

"The apartment is a living thing," says Mrs. Rayner. Mrs. Ertegun adds, "The couple's interests are very broad. They love art, and they actively support individual artists and arts institutions. They're always open to new ideas and things." The library perhaps best exemplifies this range of interests, and it is where the couple spend much of their time. Sharing the room with a wide variety of art books, hundreds of rare books by such authors as Tennyson, Sir Walter Scott, and Balzac, and bound issues of *The Sportsman* and *Punch* are the majority of the modern artworks in the house—paintings by Giacometti, O'Keeffe, Magritte, and Léger, sculpture by Marini and Zuñiga. The couple will often lunch here, one day at a George III mahogany rent table in front of a crackling fire, another day at a table whose 18th-century Spanish bone chess set has been put aside. Or they'll relax in another room—they thrive on familiarity with every part of the house.

With room to wander and something to admire each step along the way, plus a love of company and entertaining, the couple encourage their guests to use the house as enthusiastically as they do themselves. A typical dinner party—though given their attention to detail, none is really like another—begins with drinks in the library, served from a bar that usually hides behind fake volumes of such books as *The Discovery of America*. After cocktails, the guests are led through the gallery, whose etched-glass skylights now *(Text continued on page 83)*



In the gentleman's dressing room, the 12 panels of a magnificent Coromandel screen were carefully taken apart and framed to serve as closet doors. Not altered in any way, the screen can be reassembled when the owners so choose. Mac II designed the Oriental-style ceiling, as well as the telephone unit. Mahogany hall chair is George III.





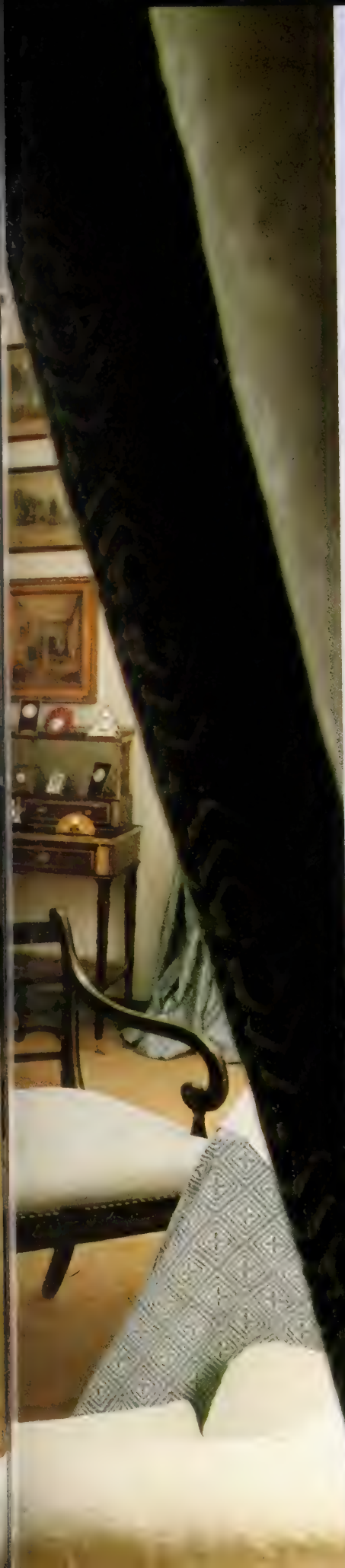


let in twilight, to the dining room. The table is arrayed with one of the many sets of china the lady of the house has collected through the years. Menus stand in gold Fabergé holders. The flowers—not only here but throughout the house—are spectacular. The cook's privacy has its rewards for her diners: The food is inventive and marvelous. After dinner, guests retire to the living room. On their way there through the gallery, they see that the 16th-century carpet has been removed, the celestial and terrestrial English globes by Dudley Adams placed in corners. A musician is playing soft music. After a brandy, everyone dances.

Once home, these guests will talk a bit about the party, remarking that it was one of the most relaxing and enjoyable evenings they've had in some time. They have returned from the home of people who live the way they want to and know how to share their life with their friends. □

Left: On a Regency inlaid burl-yew table in the lady's dressing room *(above)* is her collection of boxes and handbags, most by Cartier. Chinese hand-painted wallpaper, late Qianlong period, has hung in several of the couple's homes.







Left: The master bedroom walls are covered in white Fortuny fabric; ceiling border, headboard, curtains, and dressing-table skirt are a Fortuny print. Faux-parchment cabinet at foot of bed hides a television on a hydraulic lift. Favorite books on top rest in black-lacquer trays. *Above: The Interior of a Study With the View of the Sea,* Russian School, ca. 1870. *Below: Veranda of a Villa Near Naples,* by Gabriele Carelli, 1845.





pposite: In master bedroom, American
ld dressing-table set, ca. 1910; Victorian
rtoise-shell mirror. *This page:* On a
nheur du jour is a collection of Fabergé
ocks. Painting, one of 40 richly detailed
ıtercolors of interiors in bedroom, is
ıssian School, mid-19th century.



Things

BY ELIZABETH HARDWICK

PHOTOGRAPH BY
DEBORAH TURBEVILLE

Fiction has from time to time concerned itself with one of the worldly ruling passions, that is, the love of *things,* those specially treasured objects large and small, collected, and polished, to be arranged in a pleasing design or merely to be assembled as items of property. As part of an imagined setting, the things will have movement as they fall under the same drifting shadows and illuminations that accompany the drama of love between human beings.

The objects perform; they take their place on the stage and are subject to action and counteraction, to the aesthetics of fictional structure dominated by character, by surprise, reversal, and ambiguous resolution. It will usually turn out that passionate possessiveness is singular, even if the possessors are a family. It is not psychologically transferable since the objectified passion has itself become character, a summation of wishes, commands, and regrets. The possessor must at last come to an end while the things live on in the mute, appealing obduracy of the inanimate. The decline of one and the endurance of the other is plot.

It is one of the advantages of life over the construction of art that things may come and go in the heart, be surrendered, reduced by subsequent passions, or passed on without too painful a clinging. When things are the definition of being, they will have in fiction a moral aspect, often of some murkiness but nevertheless of a moral dimension in that lessons of behavior, appropriateness, solicitude, and fidelity are profoundly involved.

The treasuring of chosen things is quite different from greed, which is by its nature profligate in its wide absorptions. The collector, the creator by assembly of a sort of landscape of images corresponding to a vision, experiences willingly the penury of selectiveness, of exclusions and renunciations ordained by the unconscious as well as by a certain amount of knowledge, experience, by historical and even by "household" scholarship.

In all of this there is the expectation of the melancholy interlude—the melancholy and defeat that arrive when the things encounter helplessly the eye of others who are not in love or who commend the amorous display in a manner of impugning relaxation that is dangerous to the integrity of the single-minded.

Henry James's *The Spoils of Poynton* is a peculiar drama of windswept objects buffeted about by a storm of desire, fear, exigency; by calculations that grow into a frenzy of manipulation exercised without irony. The author and the reader will feel a measure of sympathy, or at least not a withholding of sympathy, for the treasures endangered, the purchases and placements and the creative will of the one who has collected. It might be said the collector has breathed life into the things by a sort of naming, as Adam in being given the power of naming the creatures of the earth has thereby asserted his dominance over them.

Mrs. Gereth, the mistress of Poynton and of the possessions that she has with careful and studious passion assembled there, is alerted to the despoiling future by the sudden importance of one coming from the domain of the tasteless. Taste is nearly always comparative and identifies its presence by the vast absences surrounding it. Mrs. Gereth has seen an estate called Waterbath, a dreadful and assertive place that is the home of the young girl her only son is attracted to and will probably marry. Her heart is appalled and the future of Poynton is vigorously menaced.

"What was dreadful now was the horrible, the intimate ugliness of Waterbath," Mrs. Gereth had said with a sob. This collector is, of course, a fierce environmentalist and believes her future daughter-in-law cannot escape the almost genetic taint of the "trumpery ornament and scrapbook art, and strange excrescences and bunchy draperies" that are the girl's familial style. Mrs. Gereth will try, with a good deal of heavy maneuver, to lead her son's affections to a clever negative, that is, to a plain young woman who has no possessions, no background, and is *(Text continued on page 185)*





DRAMA IN BLACK AND WHITE

Joseph Paul D'Urso designs a minimalist loft for playwright Lanford Wilson

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICK BARNES







Playwright Lanford Wilson and Joe D'Urso, his interior designer, were telling a visitor to the Wilson loft at the western edge of New York's Greenwich Village about strengthening the front door: Burglars had broken in. "What was stolen?" they were asked. D'Urso said, "They couldn't find anything to take," and led the laughter that followed. After all, D'Urso knows what minimalism is—he helped invent it.

Lanford Wilson, an old friend of Joe D'Urso's, chose the designer knowingly. "After all the visual demands the city makes, everything saying, 'Look at me! Look at me!' and everyone in the theater clamoring, too, I want to come home to a calm place that makes no such demands. As soon as I open my door, I feel the city slide off my back."

The design makes no demands on Wilson, but it made a great many on D'Urso. To a hasty viewer, a D'Urso room may look easy to copy: glossy white walls, charcoal industrial carpeting, black glove-leather upholstery, drafting lamps, hospital doors, and there you are. But this work is far more than spareness and color-free materials. The designer is deeply concerned with the interplay of architectural forms—beams, partial walls, enclosures within an open space—and with the exploitation of natural light. No detail escapes D'Urso. Here, for example, he raised the floor of the sitting area, partly to lend a sense of place, partly to bring unalterable windows closer to the floor. He also thickened the reveals of those windows and sloped their sills downward to lengthen them further. The D'Urso effect is a simplicity whose hard work remains off-stage. □ *By Elaine Greene*

Preceding pages: Into the open loft D'Urso inserted a group of cubelike enclosures. From left: bedroom closet, bath anteroom, electronics center. *Left:* From the work corner, a view of the sitting area across the stove pit. Electronics cube at right is in plan like a squared-off snailshell. Equipment in it is bolted down.



Center: Lanford Wilson, prolific, prize-winning playwright with a Pulitzer in 1980 for *Talley's Folly*, is a founder and resident playwright of the Circle Repertory Company in New York. He is currently translating Chekhov's *The Three Sisters*. *This page, above:* Sitting area's Hudson River view. *This page, below:* Seen on entering, black marble dining table. *Opposite, above:* Behind a low, carpeted partition the bed is partially concealed. D'Urso covered all exposed-brick walls. *Opposite, below:* Seen from banquette are Aalto chairs, Danish wood stove, marble worktable.

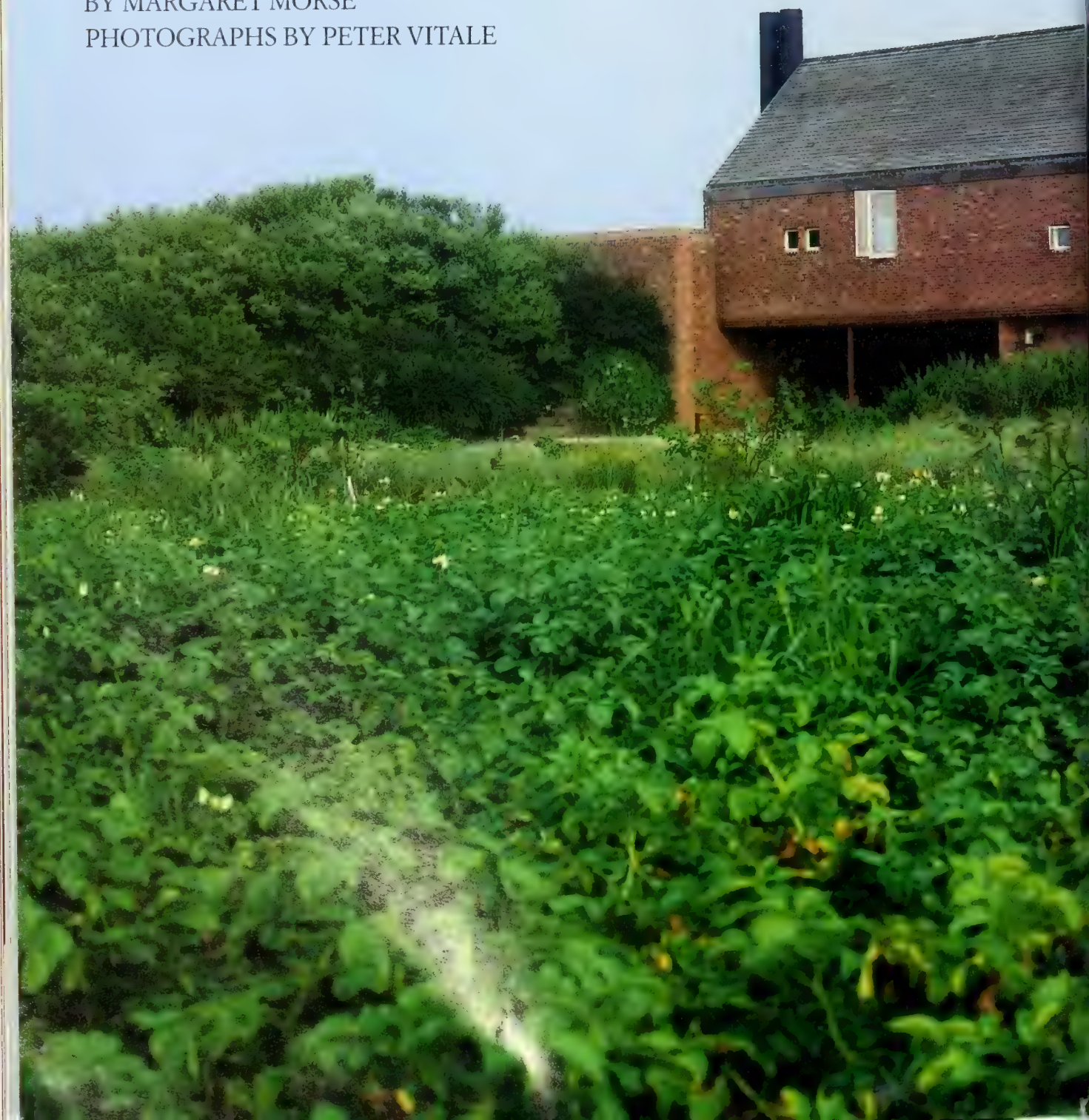


BRIGITTE LACOMBE

AT HOME IN THE FIELDS

John Saladino creates a house that looks like a cluster of contemporary farm buildings

BY MARGARET MORSE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER VITALE





The silo stores the spiral staircase to the master bedroom, and the self-contained living room (far left) has timbered gables of glass.

Left: A staircase of rough-cut cedar begins in the entryway and zigzags up to the kitchen. Nearby, a papier-mâché piece by Rauschenberg and an American Indian stump chair. *Below:* Twilight and electricity lend a prismatic quality to the ocean side of the house. Outdoor and indoor dining areas, with banquettes, link the living and sleeping wings.



He is a real-estate developer with a passion for gardening. She, a marvelous cook, who while traveling in Europe was enchanted by provincial architecture. When it came time to build a weekend house on coastal farmland in Long Island, they asked designer John Saladino to create one that would look as if it had been part of the landscape for decades. His solution: a sculptural composition of robust, farm-inspired forms, nestled in a berm planted with 17-foot-high privet hedges.

The plan of the house—a chevron with a squared-off center—shelters the ocean side from wind and spares the owners the sight of other houses. Local building codes meant keeping a respectful 150 feet from the dunes, too far back to afford ocean views from the ground floor. Rising above this limitation, Saladino located the principal rooms on the second story: a pitch-roofed living room and kitchen, adjoining dining area, and, deliberately within hearing range, the playroom and bedroom of the owners' daughter. The master bedroom—a bath and spa as well—has a third story all to itself and a crow's-nest view of passing boats. On the ground floor, two window-walled guest rooms overlook a green lawn.

John Saladino chose building materials that would weather well—from the cedar roof shingles, now silver-gray, to the copper-clad front door, now verdigris. Nineteenth-century brick was rescued from ill-fated Brooklyn town houses and the mortar (tinted to match the quarry tile of the floors) finished by broom rather than slick trowel. True to the barn tradition, the house reveals the sensuous textures of elemental materials and the craftsmanship of its construction. All the furniture was bought especially for the house. The mix of contemporary pieces (some custom-made) and American antiques shows John Saladino's romance with straight and curved forms and subtle driftwood colors. Here comfort does not shortchange the eye. *(Text continued on page 103)*





Opposite: The skylit living pavilion offers a range of seating — from pink Saporiti leather chairs to a wicker stool that also serves as a table, as does the big wrought-iron trivet that stores a straw cushion from India. *This page*: The poolside terrace is a favorite place to read — and to grill fresh-caught fish.



Opposite: The kitchen, part and parcel of the living room, uses many homegrown vegetables. *Right:* In the owners' private loft, a Saladino-designed bed stretches the visible floor space. Behind the headboard, twin sinks by a whirlpool bath. Over the exercise bike, an American Indian beadwork vest.



Simple things, old and new, set the tone: a snowshoe rocking chair from L.L. Bean by the fireplace, a schoolhouse sampler in the master bedroom, a child's plow on the top kitchen shelf. Nautical fittings provide polish. Teak galley rails serve as bath-towel bars, stays and turnbuckles as a balustrade. Lighting is strictly High Tech—factory lights hanging in the kitchen, minimalist stainless-steel lamps in the master bedroom. Each ceiling crossbeam is a pair of Douglas fir timbers, silhouetted at night by recessed uplights and downlights sandwiched in between them.

Although the house was built some seven years ago, the man of the family is still fine-tuning it. Says John Saladino: "He's always at something—caulking, trying out a new brick sealant, or buffing the tile. It's his toy." Sunlight and classical music (thanks to a Boulton stereo system) pour into every room—even the kitchen, which issues forth such seasonal specialties as sorrel soup, vegetable pâté, and paella. □

A TOUCH OF TUT FOR CHER

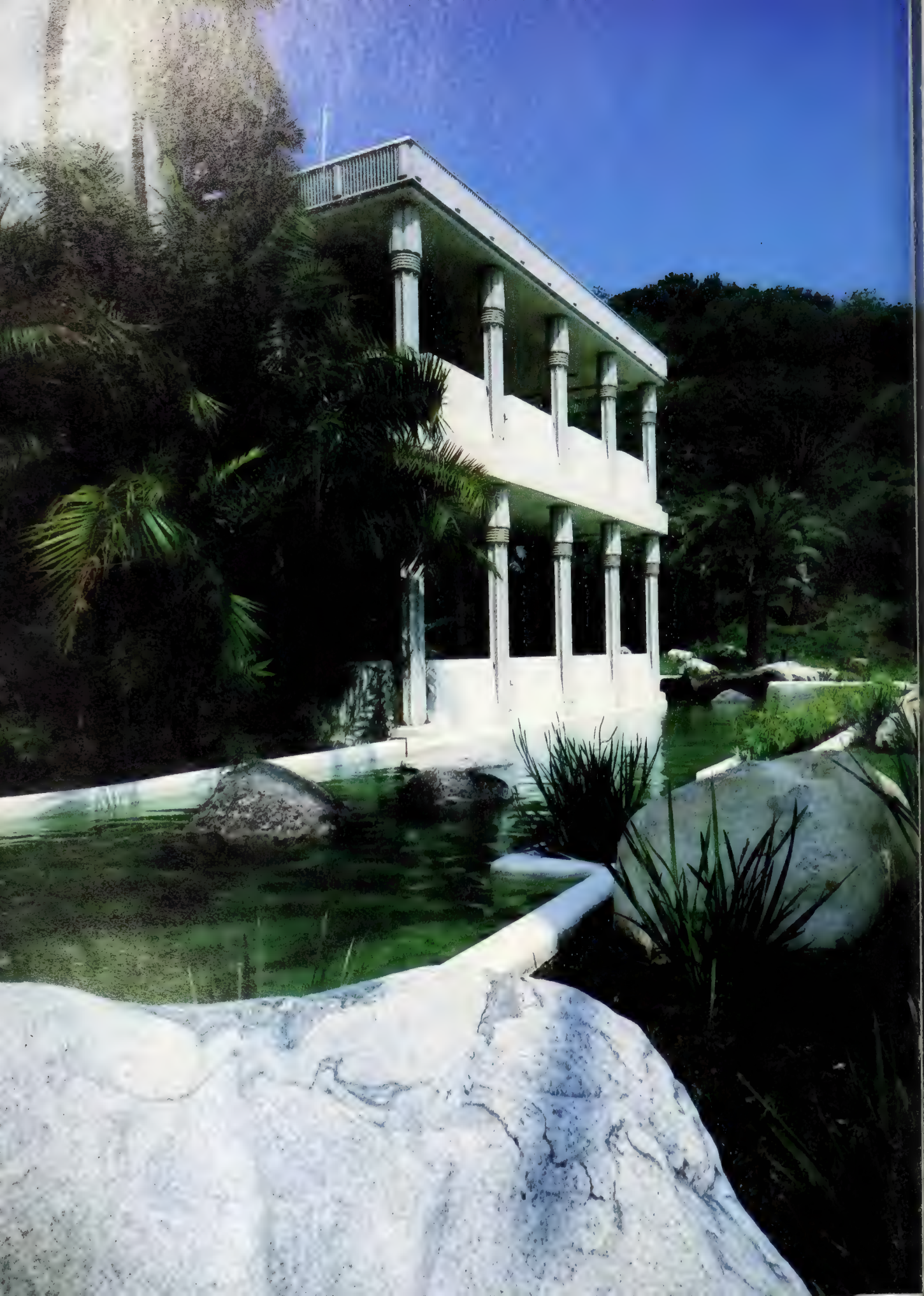
Designer Ron Wilson and Architect Ted Grenzbach collaborate on an Egyptian fantas



BY ALEXANDER COCKBURN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARY NICHOLS



View from the entry. Cobras entwine around bowls of late-18th-century torchères. In the living room, wood animal sculpture on table. Indian bronze snake sconces on far walls.



After 12 homes in 13 years Cher finally decided to build a house for herself. It took four years, and the day I went to visit it was not an auspicious one for California domestic architecture. Queen Elizabeth II (the monarch, not the boat) had just been through Los Angeles amidst the most frightful storms. Bulletins were coming through on the radio as we drove up Benedict Canyon, above Beverly Hills. Half the Santa Monica pier was missing. Billie Jean King's home in Malibu was tilting dangerously. As we climbed the hill through the driving rain I began to fear that Cher's homage to Egypt would be washed away in the mini-Nile that the canyon seemed in danger of becoming.

Baseless fears. Cher's new home would not have to be rescued from the waters and perched next to that other refuge in the Metropolitan Museum, the Temple of Dendur. It sits securely on some 14,000 square feet of California hillside, about $5 million worth of travertine and other substances, extending stylistically from Luxor to Cordoba, far more restrained than one would have thought from some of the reports of Cher's Egyptian palace, though still very definitely a bow in the direction of ancient Thebes.

Ron Wilson met Cher 21 years ago, when she was a teenager in Encino and he was the 23-year-old construction superintendent for his family firm, which happened to be building Cher's mother a house. A few years thereafter he sold Sonny and Cher their first $40,000 house, and some months after that success deposited the couple in the $300,000 former home of Tony Curtis in Bel-Air. Wilson designed it and nine subsequent abodes until he and architect Ted Grenzbach began to grapple with Cher's architectural ambitions in the late 1970s.

"I believe," Wilson says, "that the house began in thought as a Mediterranean house. As she got more involved with the architect and myself her thoughts began to go in a more modern direction. It's unfortunately been called her Egyptian palace. There was a year when she was very involved with Egyptian artifacts. The architect and I kept playing that down. The most difficult thing was to have a strong imagination without being campy. This was my greatest fear and hardest task: So often I found myself designing something that would be laughed at, that would be Egyptian-style, 1920s Cecil B. De Mille. She would so often open up an Egyptian book and say, 'Isn't this wonderful.' "

There is indeed a De Mille–like flavor to the front entrance, a Tut-ish aperture that, as the great steel door slides slowly sideways, discloses a vast 60-by-20-foot reception area. Once past the door, Egyptian monumentalism gives way to more of a Moorish idiom, with the central axis an atrium, second-floor loggia, and retractable glass roof.

It had once been Cher's hope to turn the atrium floor into a whirlpool. The floor would open to reveal the turbid waters and the roof slide sideways to allow bathers to stare straight up at the sky. In the end Cher abandoned the idea.

Cher, Wilson, and Grenzbach have put together the coherent expression of an extravagant dream, and not a domestic equivalent of Grauman's Egyptian Theatre. Taste has taken over from the old Los Angeles love affair with Egyptian Revival as expressed in what Susan Sontag once called "the crazy integrity" of De Mille.

"How do you design an Egyptian interior?" Wilson asks. "There is no such thing as an Egyptian interior. Cher imagined a palace with an anteroom, 70 by 20, with literally a chair, a plant, and an object of art." Wilson solved this by inhabiting the cavernous spaces with a few well-chosen pieces: a Pakistani door converted into a wardrobe, a few Egyptian sculptures, a hunk of amethyst rock crystal, and so forth, along with furniture whose appearance makes Wilson's professed aim for it as providing "excessive comfort" seem somewhat of an understatement.

The eye passes from sofas afoam with lamb's wool to mightily stuffed armchairs covered with cowhide stenciled into antelope. A smaller recreation area off the atrium affords more of Wilson's excessive comfort, strongly counterpointing the severities of the dining space on the far side of the atrium, austere with black granite dining table and the *memento mori* of two papier-mâché sarcophagi.

"This house," said Wilson as we headed toward the kitchen, "is my fantasy of Cher. In other houses I surrounded her with what I felt she wanted to prove her position—Italian houses filled with antiques, structures representing everything she's done in her life as an

(Continued, page 193)



Opposite: Back of the house, with a moat that winds around the side and goes under part of the driveway. *Above:* The atrium, looking toward the living room: French 1920s wood bird inlaid with mother-of-pearl, French stone bollards on a column fragment.



In Cher's bedroom. Moroccan-style grille opens onto atrium. All furniture designed by Ron Wilson covered in handwoven black and gold metallic fabric by Maria Kipp. Floors are bleached white oak. Egyptian statue of "Walking Man" is in corner. Walls and ceiling are a gray-black gravel.







The living room with furniture covered in natural woven reeding and lamb's wool. A stone pediment serves as a table. In the atrium, a mosaic fountain with a cobra.



room. Plus
ble with
versions of Chinese ce-
ramic vases. Two
pe
de
Palm fronds sprout
from a hand carved
rosewood of natural
wood in the guest
room. A gold-lacquered
end table holds
a black-glass lamp with
gold metal snake.





CHELSEA SHOW : GARDENERS



PARADISE

BY ANTHONY HUXLEY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARINA SCHINZ



Ask a serious gardener almost anywhere in the world what is the greatest flower show, and he or she will almost certainly say, "Chelsea" . . . meaning the "Great Spring Flower Show" set up every year by the Royal Horticultural Society in the Thames-side grounds of the Royal Hospital, stately 17th-century home of the red-jacketed old soldiers who are Chelsea Pensioners.

Lasting four days toward the end of May, its focal point is the Marquee covering 3¼ acres—the biggest tent in the world—and two converging roadways alongside lined with gardens. Around 120 exhibitors are involved. Two other roadways are packed with the booths and stands of around 180 horticultural firms whose wares cover the whole gamut of gardening needs and novelties.

Beyond this exhibition area of 11½ acres, part of the Hospital's pleasure grounds—the tree-studded Ranelagh Gardens—allows visitors to get away from the crowds, relax around a bandstand on fine days, and find refreshment in smaller marquees.

That is the baldest factual summary of Chelsea Show, which at least makes clear what an extensive, complex, highly organized occasion it is. 1983 is the 70th anniversary of this annual event organized by the R.H.S., which, founded in 1804, was the first *general* gardening society in the world, as distinct from small specialist predecessors. In the 19th century periodic shows took place in the Society's gardens—first at Chiswick, then at Kensington. After 1888, two-day shows every May were staged in the Temple Gardens (now known as the Embankment Gardens, close to Charing Cross): These were the real predecessors to today's exhibition. By 1911, it was clear that the Temple Gardens were becoming too small. As luck would have it, an independent international horticultural show took place in London in 1912, and its organizers, after much casting around, made a cordial arrangement with the Royal Hospital. The Royal Horticultural Society, part-sponsors of this exhibition, realized that the site could free them from the constraints of the Temple Gardens.

So the first Chelsea Show under R.H.S. auspices took place in 1913, and it has stayed there ever since, with a few years sadly missed during the two world wars (this year's will be the 62nd show). In 1913 some seven acres of grounds were occupied and the Marquee covered about ¾ acre, but the show increased rapidly to its present extent.

Most of the time the Chelsea Hospital grounds are open to the public as well as the Pensioners. The Marquee site is a grassed area, used for football and tennis, with a central wide roadway on which stands the Chillianwallah Monument, an obelisk commemorating an Indian battle of 1849. This rather gaunt monument is enveloped within the Marquee, facing its main entrance: a challenge to exhibitors.

The transformation of this flat recreation area into a great flower show is a remarkable piece of organization. The annual 40-day lease to the R.H.S. starts at the end of April. Soon after, exhibitors begin on their gardens and outside displays; the Marquee and subsidiary tents are erected, the booths and stands constructed. It is all a bit like making a film set. The floral displays within the Marquee are necessarily set up a relatively short time before the show's opening.

Everything has to be perfectly finished, every surplus flower and twig swept away, by 4:30 P.M. on the Monday of show week. It is then that the traditional Royal visit takes place. Her Majesty the Queen is almost always there, with the Queen Mother, who is the most ardent gardener among the Royal family, and many others. They are escorted by the Society's President, Lord Aberconway, and members of the Society's Council.

Quite apart from the Royal visit, that late Monday afternoon is a magical time. Every stand, every flower is at its best in the moist, tranquil air. Almost everyone present then has been working very hard, and enjoys the lull. Next morning—Tuesday, Members' Day—the gates will open at 8 A.M. and there are four long days ahead of surging crowds: gaping, note-taking, and ordering, exhibitors hope, as well as asking advice.

Chelsea Show seems to include practically every garden plant in existence, though this is not *quite* true! For instance, autumn and winter flowering kinds are perforce absent. But among hardy plants one is certainly not seeing just those that flower naturally in May. Those that bloom earlier are retarded—every kind of spring bulb can be seen—those that come later are forced. The season compressed by these scientific, often secret, methods is from February to around July.

The range of plants is certainly almost beyond belief, and plants are often packed very closely together. So here one could assess the qualities, for instance, of most of the clematis or peony varieties available in Britain, compare hundreds of rhododendrons and myriad alpines, or pick out the choicest herbaceous perennials.

Among exotics from the world over, orchids are massed here by half a dozen specialist growers—the worth of the thousands of plants enough to make an insurer blench. Another speciality that has been prominent in recent years is the dwarfed bonsai tree; in 1980 the Chinese—who invented the art long before the Japanese and call the trees *penjing*—staged an exhibit for the first time.

Tropical foliage plants are always beautifully displayed by houseplant nurseries. There are strange cacti and succulents, exotic gingers and heliconias, artificial-looking proteas and their kin, some flown in from the West Indies, Kenya, or South Africa. Overseas collectives, notably the Dutch and Belgians and lat- *(Text continued on page 170)*





receding pages: In the Marquee, visitors look and ake notes at the Hardy lants Society's exhibit, hich includes Solomon's eal and Geranium *acrorhizum. Opposite, top:* isk's display—a dictionary f Clematis. *Opposite, ottom:* Front and center, ne recently discovered hododendron *akusumanum,* at L.R. ussell, Ltd. *Above:* lackmore & Langdon's pectacular delphiniums nd tuberous begonias ith flowers that an be a foot across.

"Competition breeds ever higher standards each year, so Chelsea is never the same– except that it is always incomparable"

—Lord Aberconway,
President of the Royal Horticultural Society

"Why is Chelsea regarded by so many gardeners world-wide as the finest flower show the world, and a visit to it as the highlight of their gardening year? The answer must lie in the range and variety of the exhibits, the supreme standard of excellence achieved in the cultivation and condition of the plants, and the skill and taste shown in their arrangement" — Lord Aberconway



Opposite: Astilbe, hosta, primroses, and other woodland plants in the planting by the R.H.S.'s Wisley Gardens on the Rock Garden Bank at the river entrance to the Chelsea Show.
Above: The map of Great Britain in herbs by the British Herb Trade Association.
Left: Tartlike baskets of fruit: The National Farmers Union's display.





Mavericks on today's architectural scene, ne young Florida firm Arquitectonica is usy creating brash buildings in a new ostalgic style — Romantic Modernism

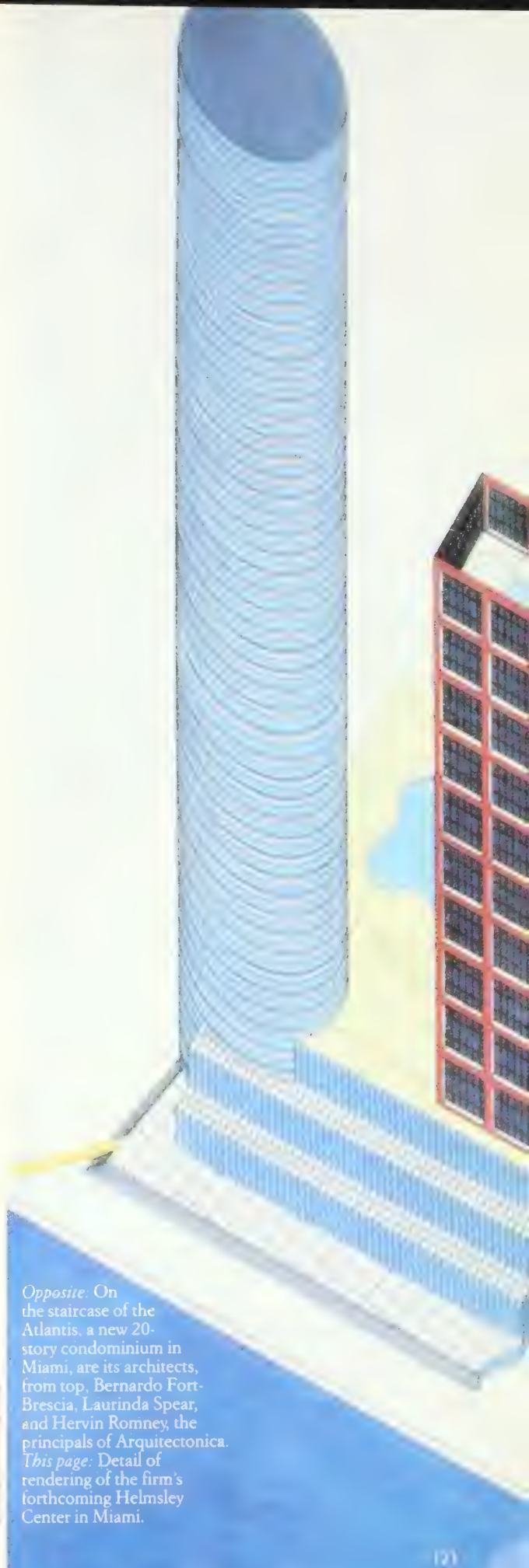
HIGH-RISE HOTSHOTS

BY MARTIN FILLER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NORMAN McGRATH

Miami is one of those magical American places—like Los Angeles and Las Vegas—that people tend to think of more as myth than as reality. If Los Angeles is the tinsel shrine of the silver screen and Las Vegas the pot of gold at the end of a neon rainbow, then Miami is the waking dream of nights of tropical splendor. Real-estate boom town of the 1920s, Miami flourished during the '30s and '40s and faded in the '60s and '70s as cheap air travel lured novelty-hungry tourists to more exotic destinations. But the city's considerable Hispanic population (swelled by refugees from Castro's Cuba) proved to be a magnet for compatriots from the Caribbean and Central and South America, drawn by the prospect of political stability and a safer place for investments.

It was not Fortress America they sought, but something closer to those old movies that starred Betty Grable and John Payne, with Carmen Miranda for comic relief. For the American Good Life at its most glamorous, most romantic, and most pleasurable has always been Miami's mythic promise. Much of the arch- *(Text continued on page 124)*



Opposite: On the staircase of the Atlantis, a new 20-story condominium in Miami, are its architects, from top, Bernardo Fort-Brescia, Laurinda Spear, and Hervin Romney, the principals of Arquitectonica. *This page:* Detail of rendering of the firm's forthcoming Helmsley Center in Miami.





The north façade of the Atlantis summarizes the Arquitectonica style: a mixture of the classic forms and materials of the International Style and playful, almost surreal, visual surprises.



Right: The south side of the Atlantis is defined by a blue-stucco grid encompassing three stories within each square. The skycourt, a 37-foot cube, was made structurally possible by the building's concrete slab and column system, which carries the load over the four-story opening. *Above:* The curving east end of the building faces Biscayne Bay. The two-story Shingle Style structure at the left, built in 1910, was part of the old Tiffany estate and is now used as the condominium's meeting room. A larger adjacent building formerly to the right had to be demolished when a new zoning regulation forced the abandonment of Arquitectonica's original scheme, which called for a single stiltlike support to raise the rounded end of the apartment building over the existing house (see page 127, top).

itecture of the Miami area has captured that mood perfectly. The pink-stucco Spanish fantasies of Coral Gables, the Art Deco dazzlers at the southern end of Miami Beach, and the mammoth pleasure palaces designed by Morris Lapidus in the 1950s—the stupendous Fontainebleau and Eden Roc—made questions of excess (and even good taste) a killjoy exercise.

But where have been their successors? Developers these days do not seem to have their predecessors' keen sense that image is one of the most successful sales tools in real estate. Most high-rise residential construction in America today ranges from the merely mediocre to the downright dreary, a condition depressingly clear in Miami. And that is true even at the luxury level, leading one to wonder if it's really worth all the trouble to become a millionaire if one then must live in a building of so little distinction. Some of the most interesting alternatives to the creative stagnation in apartment-building architecture have been provided by an avant-garde Florida firm, Arquitectonica International Corporation, which has designed a series of startling structures in Miami that suggest the possibilities an imaginative approach to high-rise housing can provide.

The youthfulness of that firm's three principals—Bernardo Fort-Brescia is 31, Laurinda Spear is 32, and Hervin Romney is 42—is on the one hand surprising (since few architects that young are given the chance to design as many large-scale projects as Arquitectonica has), but on the other hand helps explain their blithe, adventurous attitude. For one thing, the Arquitectonica style runs directly counter to the current Post Modernist trend. At a time when many young architects are rejecting both the forms and materials of the International Style and embracing a new Romantic Classicism, Arquitectonica has devised a style that could be called Romantic Modernism.

The firm's name (which means "architectural" in Spanish) and the Hispanic heritage of two of its members (Romney was born in Cuba, Fort-Brescia in Peru) are clues that those young designers have looked more to the freewheeling interpretations of the International Style in South America (to say nothing of Miami Beach Modern) than to the more earnest and severe examples produced in Northern Europe and North America. The Arquitectonica aesthetic was initially much influenced by the work of the contemporary Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas, with whom Spear collaborated while she was at Columbia. His recent book *Delirious Manhattan* is a paean to the heady fantasies of the architects of Modernism's heroic early phase. Nothing to them seemed beyond their powers—zeppelin moorings atop the Empire State Building, rooftop bosques atop Rockefeller Center—and the architects of Arquitectonica have tried to recapture that misplaced spirit of buoyant optimism.

The most successful of their completed works is the Atlantis, a 20-story condominium apartment building overlooking Biscayne Bay in Miami. It is immediately clear, even at a distance, that the Atlantis is quite different from the standard high rises around it. An early-warning signal comes in the form of the building's bright red, prism-shaped "roof" on its street side. Closer inspection reveals more unexpected touches. Jutting out from the sleek aluminum-and-glass curtain wall above the entry to the Atlantis are four triangular yellow balconies that seem like the swept-back fins of some streamlined *(Text continued on page 127)*



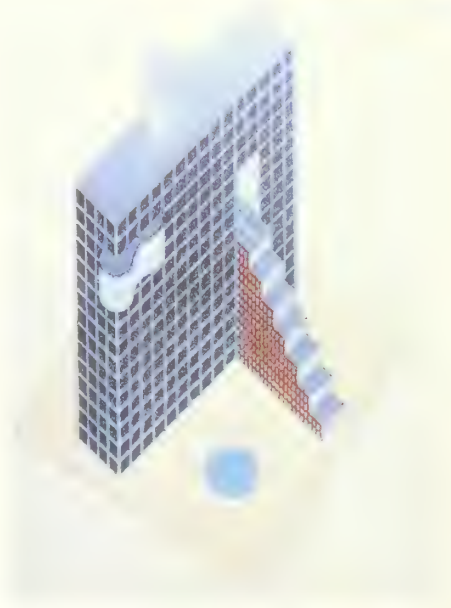
behemoth. Even more incongruous is the building's "skycourt," a 37-foot open cube 12 stories above ground that presents the paradox of a large hollow at the heart of an even larger mass. The building's glittering glass skin wraps tautly around the prowlike end that fronts the water, but the southern side of the building sports an entirely different face. Its façade is defined by a bright blue, superscale stucco grid, the component squares of which are three stories high and enclose open balconies. This bold tension between solid and void is the diametric opposite of the sleek High Tech sheen of the north side and gives the Atlantis an intriguing visual variety rarely seen in tall buildings of any kind today.

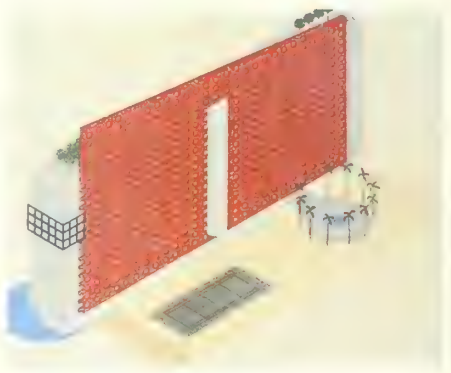
But the overall feeling is not so much of compositional perfection—the finishes are not meticulous enough and the images are not profound enough—as it is of great good humor. The surrealistic touches, such as the shock of a full-grown palm tree wafting in the breeze at the ninth-story level, are more reminiscent of the gentle, bouncy mood of Joan Miró than the tortured, neurotic aura of Salvador Dali. The affectionate Modernist Revival style of the Atlantis typifies the impression that one gets from most of Arquitectonica's work, which is not unlike that of watching high-school kids dress up for the senior prom in granddad's 1930s tailcoat and grandmère's bias-cut Molyneux gown. It evinces a certain insouciant charm, but also makes a broad wink in the direction of those who are thereby made aware that the effort is at least in part a put-on. To be sure, that rather arch attitude has been part of avant-garde American architecture for some 20 years now, ever since Robert Venturi and Charles Moore began to tweak the nose of the architectural establishment with their sharply satirical designs. But Arquitectonica reinterprets a phase of architectural history that until now has been largely the butt of pointed architectural wit, and not the source of it.

The firm's other recently completed condominium project is a stone's throw away from the Atlantis. The Palace, as it is called, doesn't come off as well as its smaller and newer neighbor, though it is still vastly superior to the conventional apartment buildings that crowd the skyline nearby. Arquitectonica had wanted the Palace to appear as two interpenetrating slabs: one 41-story monolith with a narrow slot cut to make it seem like a modern arch and a 16-story stepped structure seemingly slipped at a perpendicular through that opening. The roof of the lower wing would form an open skycourt complete with swimming pool, a reflective surface that would further emphasize the dematerialization implied by this act of engineering bravura. Regrettably, the Palace's developer, New York real-estate tycoon Harry Helmsley, called for the elimination of the skycourt, and now the two segments seem merely to have collided head-on, rather than gracefully gliding by each other in the way the designers envisioned. Perhaps the estimable artistic success scored by Arquitectonica with the Atlantis will embolden Helmsley to go the full distance with them in their next major project for him, the $150-million, mixed-use Helmsley Center in Miami, a grouping of three striking high-rise towers, one of which wistfully recalls the arch-shaped slab of the Palace before its lamentable modification.

At the tender age of six, Arquitectonica is now in an enviable position for a firm so young and artistically audacious. Without falling into the *(Text continued on page 175)*







Left: The skycourt of the Atlantis is a romantic aerie complete with kidney-shaped whirlpool and transplanted palm tree. Undulating stucco wall and bright primary colors add to the whimsical air. *Above, from top:* Arquitectonica's original design for the Atlantis, with its east end raised to save the old Tiffany house, now demolished; the firm's first scheme for the Palace condominium; the Imperial, a condominium under construction near the Atlantis and the Palace on Miami's Brickell Avenue.

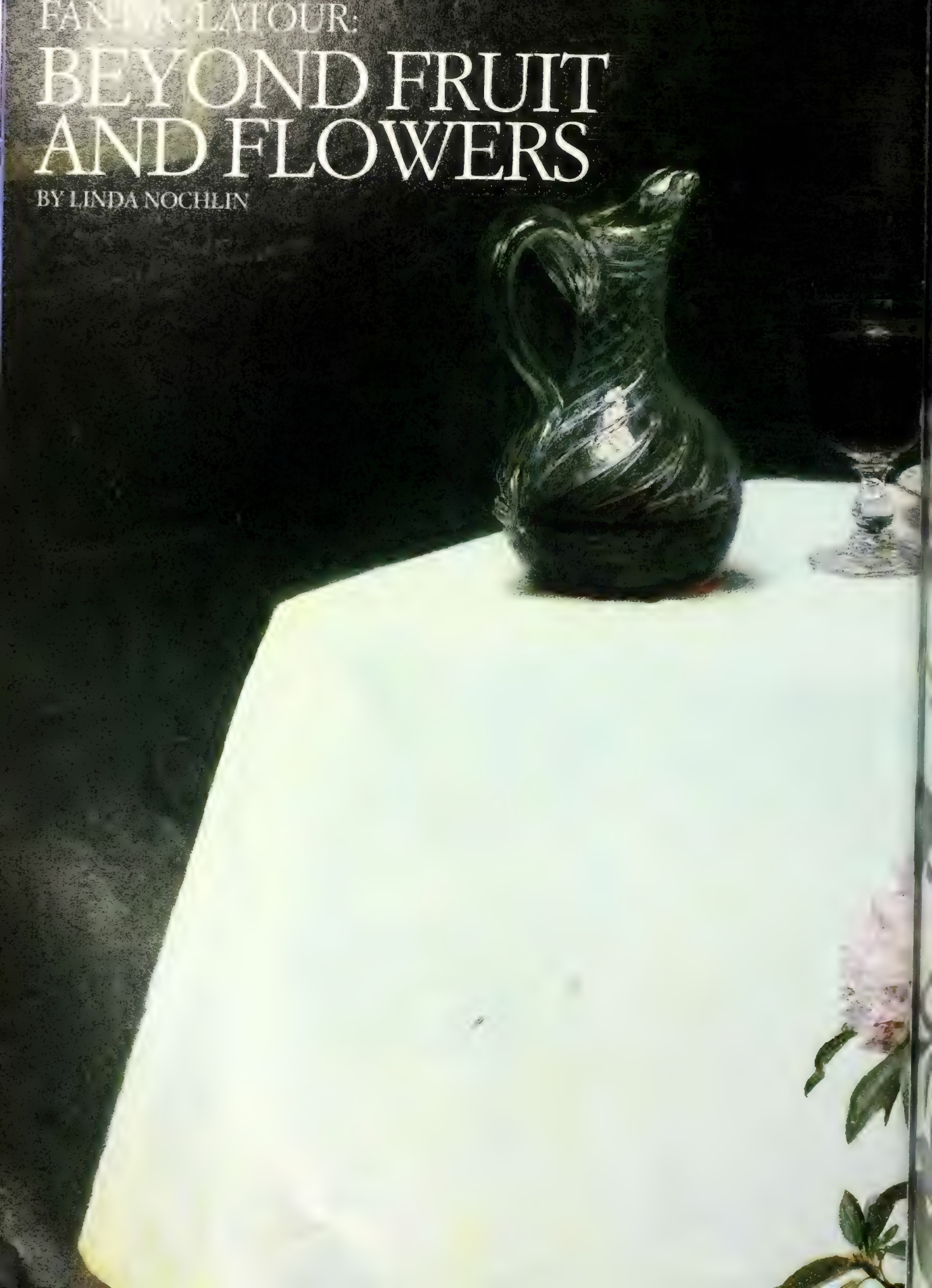


Left: The Bayan Palace, the tallest apartment building in Miami, intended by its architects to look like two separate structures that interpenetrate one another (see preceding page, center), modifications imposed by the developer for budgetary reasons diminished the effect. *Right:* The Palace's dramatic porte-cochere, at the intersection of the building's two slabs, faces Brickell Avenue and continues the window pattern of the stepped red-stucco building built perpendicular to the white-stucco slab.

FANTIN-LATOUR:

BEYOND FRUIT AND FLOWERS

BY LINDA NOCHLIN





Here they are, those literary superstars of the 19th century, gathered around the table like guests on a TV talk show, in Fantin-Latour's group portrait of 1872, *A Corner of the Table*, a work featuring bald, impassive Paul Verlaine and pouting, boyish Arthur Rimbaud, *poètes maudits*, whose unholy liaison even more than their literary bravado was creating a scandal in Paris at the time. Two years earlier, Fantin had assaulted the sensibilities of Parisian Salon-goers by representing the notorious Édouard Manet in his studio, surrounded by his disciples; and three years before that, had aroused controversy with a mixed lot of painters and critics provocatively deployed on either side of a portrait of Eugène Delacroix, in a painted homage to the recently departed Romantic painter. Certainly, Fantin-Latour deserved his reputation as *peintre-provocateur* of the avant-garde in the middle of the century.

Yet in a youthful self-portrait, refused for the Salon of 1859, the young Henri Fantin-Latour (1836–1904), whose work is now on view in a major exhibition at The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, seems anything but a bold challenger of the status quo: On the contrary, this is an image marked by ambivalence. Although his pose is self-assured, even a little rigid, the young artist looks out at us with an uneasy, pensive, rather melancholy gaze, his face mysteriously riven in two by Rembrandtian shadow, so that—a device later perfected by Picasso—we see him at once in profile and full face. In both the literal and figurative senses, this is the image of a divided self, and indeed, Fantin-Latour was to embody in his personality and work most of the major conflicts and contradictions of his time. A creator of challenging group portraits, he made his living with canvases of fruit and flowers; a life-long promoter of Manet and contemporary Realism, he nevertheless looked back wistfully to the Great Tradition of European painting, scorned the nascent Impressionist movement, and even attempted to introduce an allegorical figure of Truth—nude, of course, because Truth, after all, is nothing but naked—into a frock-coated group of contemporary artists in an ill-fated project called *The Toast!* And at the same time that he was devoting himself to recording the sober actuality of modern life and the meticulous representation of peaches and peonies, he could let his imagination—and his brushwork and color—run riot in poetic inventions with titles like *Féerie* or *Tannhäuser: Vénusberg*.



Preceding page: Still Life: Corner of a Table, 1873, is unusually large and ambitious. Fantin said he had "the idea of making it look like a natural arrangement of random objects." *Above: Self-Portrait,* 1867. *Opposite: The Betrothal Still Life,* 1869. Fantin chose this modest but classical still life as an engagement present for his future wife, flower painter Victoria Dubourg.

Art was, unquestionably, Fantin-Latour's religion. "I am entirely dedicated to the worship of these great artists—that is my religion: Art—the only ideal, the only pure thing about mankind," he burst out passionately in a letter of 1864. But it was a religion whose rituals were entirely secular and contemporary, enacted on the embattled terrain of radical Realism; a cult whose god was Édouard Manet and whose hymns were composed by Wagner and Berlioz. Certainly, it was a religion that was perceived by his contemporaries as subversive, an evangelism of aesthetic revolution. Fantin's three most ambitious group portraits—the *Homage to Delacroix, A Studio in the Batignolles Quarter,* and *A Corner of the Table*—were intended as manifestoes of his belief in the most advanced art of his time.

It is perhaps hard for us today to make out the lineaments of artistic daring in these sober, apparently forthright, almost photographic documents of the artistic luminaries of the 19th century. Their creation was, nevertheless, fueled by the same passion to justify modernity that burned in the heart of a Baudelaire or an Émile Zola. By documenting his faith in art in the language of modern Realism, and, above all, with a cast of characters that included some of the most controversial figures of his time, Fantin, the hesitant bourgeois, whether he wanted to or not, was making a powerful political statement.

He was certainly an artist who knew how to attract attention. The earliest of his major group portraits, the *Hommage à Delacroix,* appeared in 1864, the year following the famous Salon des Refusés—the exhibition of paintings rejected from the official Salon—and, by no mere coincidence, included five of the young artists who had participated in that notorious show, including the young Fantin himself, seated, in a white shirt, holding a palette. To his right, arrogantly intruding into the very frame of Delacroix's image, stands his friend, Mr. Whistler, whose *White Girl* had been one of the particular scandals of the more general one of the Salon des Refusés itself, and on the other side of Delacroix's portrait, the even more notorious Édouard Manet, creator of the pornographic *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, in which recognizable Parisian men-about-town had been shown disporting themselves in the company of naked models. As though this were not enough, two of Realism's leading critical polemicists were featured in the painting: Champfleury, seated in the foreground, had been Gustave Courbet's chief publicist in the '50s and might be said to have almost invented the Realist movement single-handedly; and the young Duranty, supporter of Manet and Degas, is represented in profile to the left. Seated glumly in the right-hand corner is Baudelaire, no friend of Realism, certainly, but the leading champion of both modernity and Delacroix, and unquestionably *(Text continued on page 135)*







A Corner of the Table, 1872. The presence of poets Paul Verlaine and Arthur Rimbaud conferred immediate notoriety on this painting when it appeared in the 1872 Salon. The painting is relatively conservative in composition—it is the cast of characters that strikes a radical note.

by this time, three years before his death at the age of 47, the Grand Old Man of artistic scandal.

When the Salon of 1864 opened, a large crowd, and by no means a friendly one, pressed around Fantin's big portrait. As the critics began to realize that this supposed "homage" to Delacroix was actually an assemblage of Realists, mostly young and in some cases notorious, their indignation knew no bounds. How presumptuous could these painters be, to literally put themselves into the same picture as the revered master of Romanticism? One critic, now forgotten, Audéod by name, went so far as to declare that the artists represented in the so-called *Hommage,* far from being devotees of the dear departed Delacroix, were in actuality devoted exclusively to what he termed "the cult of ugliness, vulgarity, and crudeness"; still others, while less hard on the cast of characters in Fantin-Latour's painting, were nevertheless outraged by its style: It was felt to be lacking in exaltation, the idealism proper to a true homage. There was nothing inspiringly heroic about a lot of men in dark suits hanging around a painting and a vase of flowers. As a testimonial to one of the glories of French culture, the work was felt to be too modest, too middle-class, lacking in poetic élan.

Fantin's next major work, *A Studio in the Batignolles Quarter,* exhibited in the Salon of 1870, was an even more overt profession of faith in advanced art, here embodied in the person of Édouard Manet, who had been the subject of a portrait, dedicated "To my friend, Manet," in 1867. In the group painting of 1870, which immediately reminded people of Courbet's combative *"allégorie réelle," The Painter's Studio* of 1855, the leader of the new movement is represented seated at his easel, surrounded by people and objects referring to the most radical artistic currents of the day, most significantly, the young Impression-



ists-to-be, Monet and Renoir. Although they were not to be identified with Impressionism until the first Impressionist show in 1874, they were already marked out as followers of Manet and the new direction in art. In the center of the work, isolated by the picture frame that surrounds his head like a rectangular halo, stands the youthful Renoir, ascetic and fragile as a medieval saint, his glance tensely focused on the process of creation taking place on the easel before him. In the background, to the far right, stands Claude Monet, his body partially concealed by the towering form of Frédéric Bazille, who was to be killed just a year later in the Franco-Prussian War, but is here looking both confident and natty in a long stretch of plaid trousers; to the right of Renoir stands the novelist Émile Zola, who had just written a ringing defense of Manet in 1867. The sitter whom Manet is observing so intensely is Zacharie Astruc, poet, critic, and lover of all things Spanish, close friend of both Fantin and Manet, who had encouraged the latter to undertake his crucial trip to Spain in 1865, and who in fact was the subject of a portrait by Manet which appeared in the very Salon in which Fantin's group portrait did, thereby authenticating the status of *A Studio in the Batignolles Quarter* as a true-to-life Realist documentary.

Still, there was something disturbingly unnatural about this homage to the *chef d'école* of contemporary actuality. Although Fantin had tried to create a more relaxed, casual-looking composition here than in his earlier *Hommage à Delacroix*, nevertheless there was something strangely isolated about each of the figures in the composition, a lack of psychological rapport and pictorial unity, which led one critic to compare the painting to "an assemblage of *(Text continued on page 190)*

Right: Flowers and Various Objects, 1874. Choice of objects bears witness to Fantin's wish to give this picture significant meaning. The cast is of a Greek *Aphrodite Binding Her Sandal* and probably represents the eternal form of beauty; the framed Japanese woodcut and fan symbolize the current importance of Japanese art to the Parisian vanguard of the time. *Left: Édouard Manet,* 1867. He was Fantin's idol. The painter is presented with photographic accuracy in an attitude at once elegant, dignified, and self-assured.









THE COUNTRY LIFE OF A PASSIONATE SHOPKEEPER

BY ELAINE GREENE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY SNOWDON

If the world is divided into guests and hosts, as some say, Sir Terence Conran surely reigns among the hosts, spreading his warmth in his London town house, through his hundreds of shops on three continents, in his Covent Garden restaurant, and here, in his 1772 Berkshire country manor.

Left: From the raised garden with handsome and useful flaring corners that the Conrans built in front of their Georgian house, *above,* can be seen a herd of fiberglass deer by sculptor Nick Monro.





Right and above: A huge sitting room 100 feet long was made when the Conrans combined two front rooms and a center hall. The family tends to gather at the end where the shelves are and to work in the area where the sawhorse desk stands. Combined here are new things, many from Habitat-Conran's, with antique rugs and iron chaises.

Terence Conran is a solution looking for a problem," a friend of his says, and the worlds of design and merchandising are filled with problems. Conran's solutions have made business, social, and decorative-arts history and have earned him a fortune and a knighthood, but still he scans the horizons for his kind of dragons: things that ought to work better, things that want improvement.

Some Conran problems are personal: Where to settle in the English countryside was one of them. Terence and Caroline Conran chose Barton Court, a house that Admiral Lord Dundas had built in 1772 in Berkshire, 50 miles west of London. On the 200th birthday of the house, its new owners embarked on a project that required enormous commitment, not only of material resources, but also of imagination, organization, design skill, courage, and patience. They were the right people for the job.

The Conrans found the house uninhabited, its roof fallen in, its windows all broken, its garden obliterated. Almost every interior surface needed restoration; dry rot rampaged through the structure. Superfluous buildings added during Barton Court's days as a boys' school had to be pulled down dozens of school bathroom fixtures removed.

The admiral had built a wonderful house in a place perfect for the *(Text continued on page 147)*





"Antiques inspire me. I think a room containing furnishings only from my stores would be very dull for anyone"

Right: The tile floor of the center hall is one of the surviving treasures of the house. Walls were removed on either side of the tile swath to combine three rooms. The table comes from the old town hall nearby—found in a shop—and on its surface stand flowers of the season and objects of the moment. The Conrans like variety. Sir Terence says he is "not closed off to any culture or period of design." This applies to his wares as well as his home: There are few industrialized or craftsmaking countries that Habitat-Conran's does not buy from. *Above:* David Hicks sold this saddleshop horse to Conran, and is sorry, its owner thinks.





...ans love and
...s a efficient, friendly, filled
...equipped with old and new
... opposite. Lady Caroline Conran
... of her race horses. A food writer, she often
... Conran's kitchen into a workshop.











Conrans, "in the real countryside nearest to London, and about 35 miles from the airport, where I spend a lot of time," Sir Terence says. Barton Court gives a blissful country existence to the couple, their five children between 12 and 27 (the two eldest are sons from Sir Terence's previous marriage), the extended family and all their friends, plus pets, chickens, and horses. The Conrans also own a town house in London's Belgravia, and on the banks of the Dordogne River in France there is a simple stone house that Lady Caroline especially fancies in midsummer.

The design and merchandising life of Terence Conran is most easily assimilated in list form, a stunning list: He is founder and chairman of Conran's in the United States, of the parent company Habitat in the U.K., France, and Belgium, plus the Seibu-Habitat licensees in Japan. Each of these 69 stores sells everything for the house from a sofa to a jam pot and an extra-special sort of jam to go in it. He is chairman of Mothercare, with over 400 branches on both sides of the Atlantic, whose apparel and pram customers are "young mums," as he puts it, shopping here before and after the baby arrives and as late as the child's ninth or tenth birthday. Conran is chairman of Conran Associates, the largest design organization in Europe, designing stores, products, and graphics throughout the world. He is chairman of Conran Roche, architectural and town planners, of Conran Ink, which produces his books, and of his son Jasper's dress-design firm. And he owns the Neal St. Restaurant in the London theater district.

In the 1980s, we have come to take the typical Conran room for granted with its white walls and pale woods, its cozy-craftsy china and its High Tech tea trolley. But when Habitat opened in 1964, so did the eyes of the British young, to "comfortable rooms that had nothing to do with their parents," as Barty Phillips, design editor of *The Observer* says. The term "lifestyle" could have been invented for what Habitat began to sell: a style for people's lives.

The common theme in all Conran endeavors is people; he wants things to work better for everyone. His explanation when, as a successful furniture designer, he opened the first home furnishings store: "Ordinary people have very poor access to decent design." His explanation for his intense and continuous supervision of the many branches: "I am passionate about shopkeeping. I like to be right there where I can watch people and listen in when they talk about our wares." His explanation of why he owns a restaurant: "I like to see people dining well and comfortably; I like being responsible for that."

Sir Terence's people-consciousness is complex. There is a strong streak of teacher in him, too. He has written four books: *The House Book, The Kitchen Book, The Bed and Bath Book* and, with Lady Caroline, a journalist specializing

The gesso-work ceiling in one of the guest rooms retained enough detail for experts to restore it. The antique bentwood chair is part of the family collection. Terence Conran likes a bare look such as this and often achieves it by editing out the clutter that slowly grows.



Above: Sir Terence Orby Conran at leisure, a not-too-common state. *Right:* The gigantic master bathroom is a comfortable, personal space that encourages sitting-room use: coffee and a newspaper, perhaps, in the rocker.

in cookery, *The Cook Book.* All are lavishly illustrated, lively and amusing, but all exist to instruct in clear and practical terms. The books have sold over half a million copies in the U.S. The first one, the 1972 *House Book,* was probably one of the most exchanged Christmas gifts among the trendy young when it came out.

Sir Terence's latest pedagogic effort is the much-applauded Boilerhouse Project at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Located in the old boilerhouse of this great decorative-arts museum, the new department was conceived and organized by Conran to record, define, and inspire the industrial-design process. It is financed by the Conran Foundation, a fund established when Habitat went public and, as its chairman says, "theoretical money became real and could serve some exalted purpose." The Boilerhouse will undoubtedly become an obligatory stop for design-conscious people visiting London, just as the first Habitat shops were in the 1960s, before we became as accustomed to accessible good design as we are now.

Terence Conran's role in bringing to the general public contemporary design that is affordable, simple, and cheerful (a quality he emphasizes) is his greatest source of satisfaction. The Marquess of Queensberry, an art professor, says about Conran, "More than anyone, he has proved that ordinary people have better taste than they were ever credited with having." □



BY JIMMY BRESLIN

The Bridge

High on the cables of the bridge, even with rain coming out of a winter night, the sky was gold from the light of the city. Richard Seaberg climbed the thick cable glistening and slippery from the rain, actually a covering over many cables, leading to the top of the granite tower on the Manhattan side of the Brooklyn Bridge, to where the man in the flowered shirt stood with a can of beer in his hand and stared at the black river water that was 275 feet down.

"Now just relax," Seaberg called out. "We're here."

The man high on the cable, standing at the point where the cable reaches the top of the granite tower, took a swig of beer.

Seaberg moved toward the man, as Seaberg always does, sleepy blue eyes riveted on what he wants, big hands ready to grab. He is 41, 6-foot-2, and weighs 220 pounds and is an amazing policeman, a member of the Emergency Service Unit that saves so many from suicide leaps off the Brooklyn Bridge. Seaberg has climbed the bridge a dozen times to pull people off. Twice, the person on the bridge fell before Seaberg could grab him. Once, someone kicked Seaberg and knocked him off his feet and nearly off the cable and into the sky. But Seaberg always comes back, climbing the cable, trying to save a life. Up high, Seaberg stands for all the years of the Brooklyn Bridge, for all the beauty and engineering and poetry and the river beneath it that remains the same and the city at both ends of it that has changed so much, for everyone who died building the bridge or who lived longer in the splendor of their work.

"Don't come any closer," the young guy holding the beer said to Seaberg on this night.

"I'm just as scared as you," Seaberg called to him. "I won't come any closer. Let's see what we can do for you."

Seaberg stopped. He was about 10 feet away from the guy. From now on, Seaberg would pretend he couldn't hear and that he was simply moving a little closer to catch the words.

Seaberg wore a safety belt that was hooked to one of the guide cables, but he reminded himself to be wary of the cable and to put no faith at all in the decorative rails. Now 100 years old, the Brooklyn Bridge is in such disrepair that any part can snap off; once recently, cables snapped and whipped the bridge promenade. During the 14 years it took to build the bridge, it cost the lives of 20 laborers who were earning $2 an hour, and the chief engineer, John Augustus Roebling. This was at a time when men built things to last for others. Now, in 1983, the bridge reflects a city that has so confused glory with making money that it allows a priceless monument to rot.

The first time anybody ever thought of building a bridge to connect Brooklyn and Manhattan, and thus open the way for the formation of the world's largest city, was in 1800. Then in 1849 Horace Greeley declared, "New York and Brooklyn must be united," which was by then about as original an idea as scratching an itch, but Greeley, great old fraud, took his usual credit for it. The bridge opened on May 24, 1883. On its first full day, 150,000 people crossed on foot and 1,800 vehicles went over. On May 31, 1883, Memorial Day, with 20,000 on the bridge at one time, there was a stampede and 12 people fell under the feet of the crowd and were stomped to death. Belongings dropped through train tracks on the bridge and bounced on South Street, where a young boy playing on the street, Alfred E. Smith, ran about collecting things to return to anyone who asked. It is only right that Smith's should be the one political name used in mentioning the bridge at this time, for the rest of them, even the President of the United States who was present at the opening, don't deserve to be remembered.

Besides which, names and events are only details about a bridge whose spider web of cables, gray against the sky by day, gray-blue against the gold sky of the night, make up the only large span in the world that really belongs to people. All these other bridges are only costly metal roadways dedicated to the car and truck. The Brooklyn Bridge always has been used by people: 1,400 day walk over it to and from work; many thousands use it for parades and demonstrations, or walk across it on religious holidays when the custom is to cast sins of the past year onto the waters below. It is not a bridge with a clean history or clean new lines. How could there be such a thing and still have it named after Brooklyn? Brooklyn is a place where 2.5 million people live, and during the hundred-year history of the bridge, so many millions lived and died in the borough that to give a total number is to lie. Let it be said that Brooklyn, when it had a baseball team, was the only place in the world where Joe DiMaggio was not appreciated. "Too perfect." And the bridge that bears its name is most beautiful when you see people walking across it, and it is most dramatic at a moment such as this, on a winter night when there is life and death in the sky.

"Are you married?" Seaberg called to the guy with the can of beer. If you are going to start the conversation with a potential suicide, do it with something that is important, and to Seaberg being married is very important.

The guy started to answer and then his feet slipped and he went down. He held the beer can up with one hand and with the other he grabbed the guide cable. His legs went into the sky over the river. Seaberg took a step toward him, but the man, clutching the guide cable, glared at him. Seaberg stopped. Slowly, the guy pulled himself to his feet on the thick cable.

Now I have a shot, Seaberg thought. If he saved himself, he probably wants

ne to bring him down. Seaberg had been on this bridge so many times for so many people that he was certain of his. Usually, people climb the bridge to die and when they reach the top they want to live, and the last thing that should be done is to corner them so that they force themselves to go off.

So Richard Seaberg stood still. Now the man glared at Seaberg, held up the beer in salute, took a great swallow and then spread his arms and went out into the air.

Once the guy must have been on a diving board, for he started out in a good swan dive. He plummeted through the winter rain and gold sky toward the black water. Richard Seaberg was startled that he had been wrong, that the guy had done such an enormous thing. You're missing so much, Seaberg thought. You're missing living and you never realize what that is until you get up here, get close to death and realize that there can be nothing bad enough to cause you to lose the chance to see a gold sky and breathe night air when it is raining.

Seaberg turned away. He did not see the man hit the water. But he heard, high up on this bridge, a loud splash. Seaberg started back down the wet glistening cable to the bridge roadway. He felt terrible for the man who had gone over; he said a prayer for the man. At the same time, Seaberg was happy at the thought of going straight to the phone and calling his wife and telling her that he would be home to see her and the children directly after work.

Down on the roadway, another cop, George Toth, quietly said to Seaberg, "What can you do?"

Seaberg shrugged. "That happens when you deal with people." Then the policemen walked together off the only major bridge in the world that has anything to do with people. They were to be back, of course. As soon as a couple of weeks later when a distraught man was out on the girders and Seaberg talked to him, and distracted him, and shuffled closer. Then Seaberg's large hands went out and he had the guy. He yanked him back into life. And he will do this again, Seaberg will, for his beat is a bridge traveled by people who are all so flawed. □

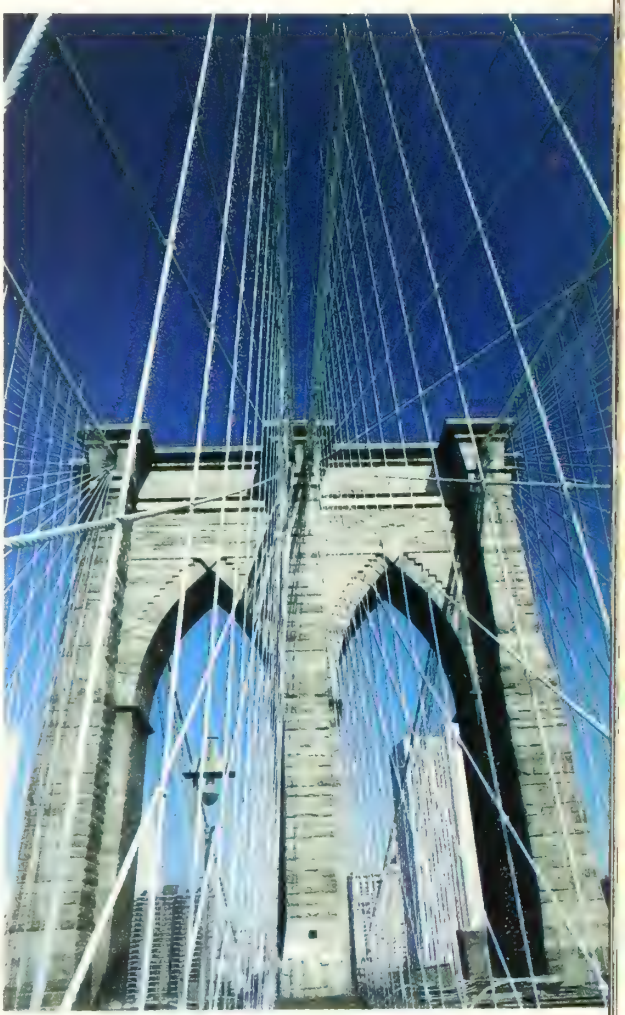
Jimmy Breslin is a columnist for the New York Daily News. *He is the author of* Forsaking All Others *and a forthcoming novel* He Forgot His Manners *(Viking Penguin).*

Again the traffic lights that skim thy swift
Unfractioned idiom, immaculate sigh of stars,
Beading thy path—condense eternity:
And we have seen night lifted in thine arms.

Under thy shadow by the piers I waited;
Only in darkness is thy shadow clear.
The City's fiery parcels all undone,
Already snow submerges an iron year...

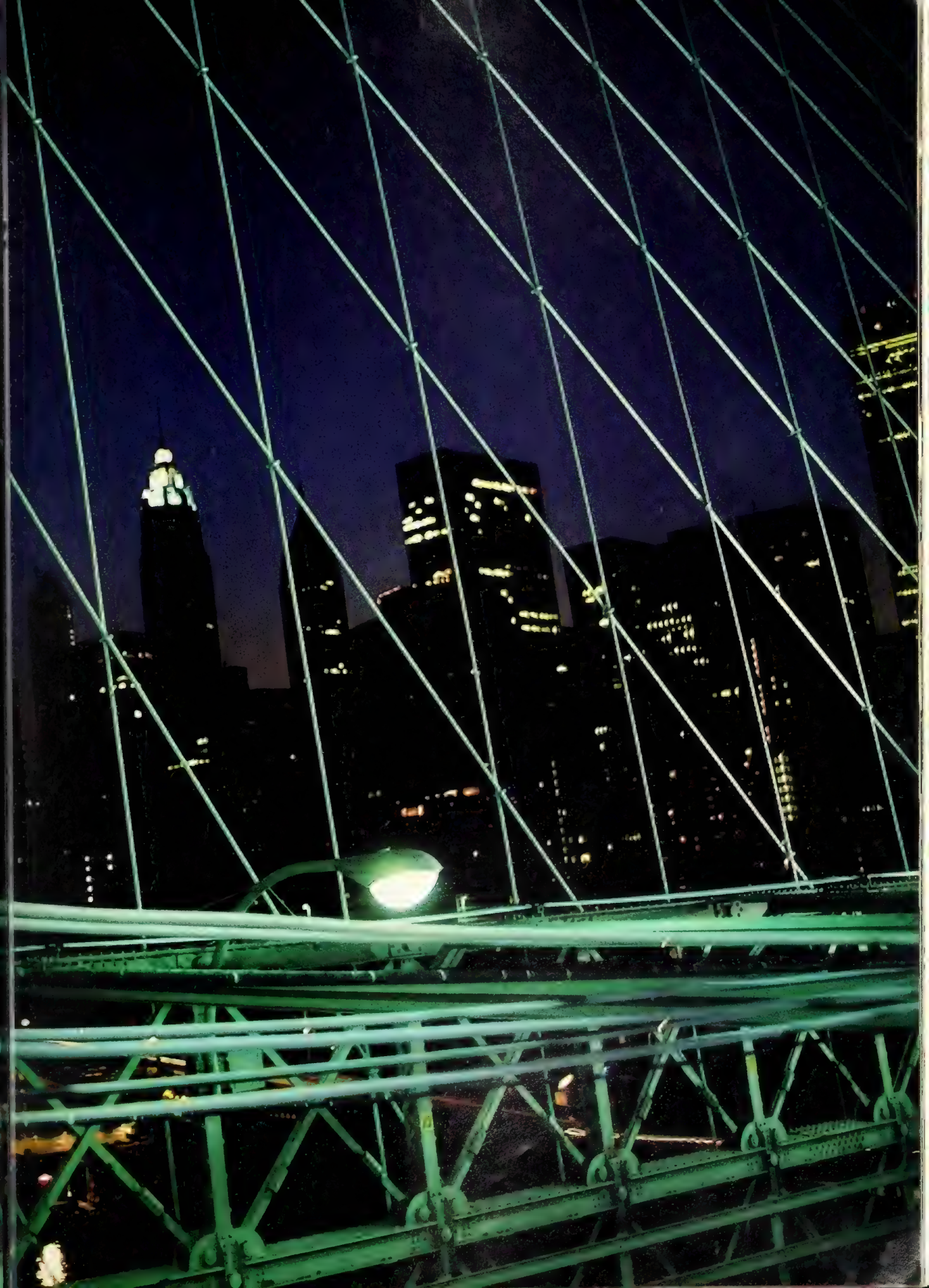
HART CRANE
From "To Brooklyn Bridge"

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY FABIEN BARON







Opposite: Entrance hall of the 1800 addition, with a bust of John Quincy Adams and a view of the Long Room. *Above:* The side of the house with original garden hedges laid out by Leonard Vassall in 1731.

THE FAMILY TREASURES OF A GREAT AMERICAN DYNASTY

Number 135 Adams Street in Quincy, Massachusetts, is a pleasant, ample gray clapboard house with green shutters and a gabled roof that, from the time of the first burst of golden daffodils until the final frosting of the lavender cosmos, radiates a modest degree of splendor. Even so, it is outshone by the splendor of the history of its occupants, beginning with John Adams, second President of the United States, and his wife, Abigail. The house has been called Peacefield, Stony Field, and Montezillo, but most lasting is the name "Old House," a succinct, tight-lipped New England way of signifying that the four successive generations rooted here in tradition and commitment have fostered America's most enduring dynasty.



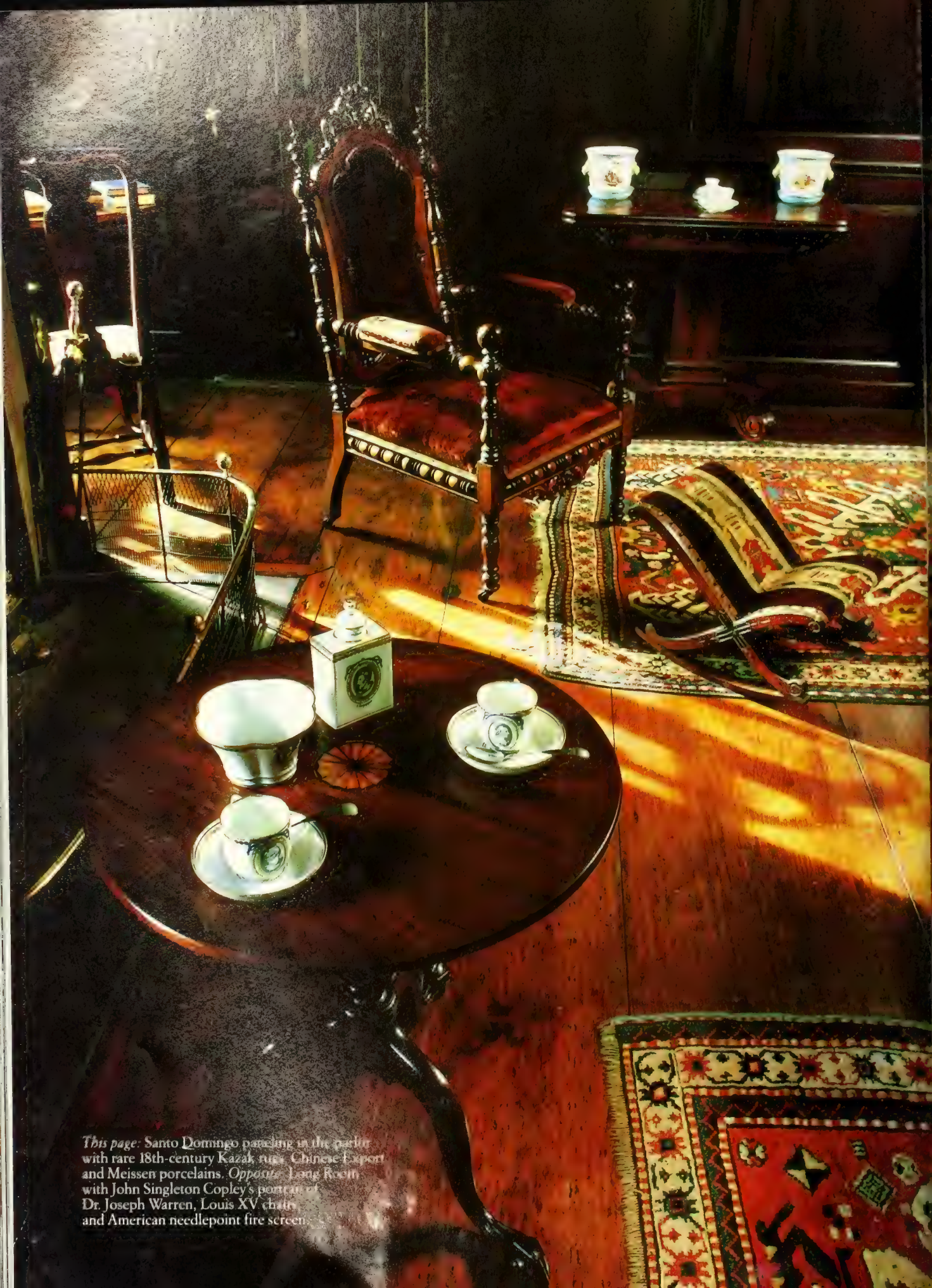
John Adams, an "awakener" of the Republic, helped to draft its Declaration of Independence, served as America's first minister to the Netherlands and to England, and as first Vice-President and second President. His wife, Abigail, proud and visionary champion of the "accomplished" woman, was a poignant diarist of the American Revolution; her letters document the colonial era with sewing circle intimacy and honesty. Their eldest

Text continued on page 159

BY PHYLLIS LEE LEVIN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSHUA GREENE





This page: Santo Domingo paneling in the parlor with rare 18th-century Kazak rug, Chinese Export and Meissen porcelains. *Opposite:* Long Room with John Singleton Copley's portrait of Dr. Joseph Warren, Louis XV chairs and American needlepoint fire screen.







Opposite: A Victorian writing desk in a corner of the dressing room. *Above:* Dining room with 18th-century American table and portrait of John Adams at age 91 by Jane Stuart, Gilbert Stuart's daughter. Flowers from the garden in a favorite Brooks Adams arrangement.

son, John Quincy Adams, Harvard rhetorics professor, minister to Prussia, Holland, Russia, and England, secretary of state, sixth President of the United States, was senator and representative early and late in life. His son, Charles Francis, was the third Adams to serve as ambassador to Britain, as well as legislator, fellow at Harvard, family historian, and editor. To be an Adams seemed synonymous with being a writer, and, in the case of Henry Adams, author of *Mont-Saint-Michel & Chartres,* great-grandson of John and Abigail, one of sweeping acclaim.

At the end of April 1785, while briefly posted in France, where Abigail had joined him after nearly 10 years of separation, John learned he had been made the first American minister to the Court of St. James's. By the end of May, the family had settled in London in a stout gray stone mansion on the northeast corner of Grosvenor Square. Feeling they had been "30 years like a rolling stone," John and Abigail were delighted to learn in the fall of 1787 that Abigail's uncle, Dr. Cotton Tufts, had completed negotiations for the purchase of a house in Quincy they had long admired and thought more suitable to their needs and status than their family cottage. In 1788 they left London and moved to the Quincy house.

The house, whose seven rooms they enlarged to 20, has a curious history. Built in 1731 as a summer home for an affluent sugar planter from the West Indies, Leonard Vassall, it had been confiscated from his Loyalist daughter, then returned to her after the Revolution. Sold to her son, Leonard Vassall Borland, owned briefly by Royall Tyler, the future playwright, during his doomed romance with the Adamses' daughter, Abigail, the house and 75 acres of field, pasture, salt marsh, and woodland became Adams territory on September 26, 1787, for the sum of 600 pounds. In his desire to acquire the adjoining 56 acres as well (at $25 apiece), John left no doubt that his property was his security and anchor. "My view is to lay fast hold of the Town," he wrote Dr. Tufts, "and embrace it, with both my arms and all my might. There to live—there to die—there to lay my bones. . . . To this end I wish to purchase as much Land there, as my utmost forces will allow that I may have Farm enough to amuse me and employ me, as long as I live."

The Adamses arrived home the morning of June 17, 1788, with church bells ringing their welcome. The house was in a state of "half-repair" only, with carpenters and masons moving about as Abigail tried to place her furniture, either damaged from the sea trip, or too cumbersome to fit in the first place. John was realistic: "It is but the farm of a patriot, but there are in it two or three spots from whence are to be seen some of the most beautiful prospects in the world." As he told his son John Quincy, *(Text continued on page 162)*





The Long Room's Louis XV furniture, signed J. Delaunay, bought for America's first embassy in The Hague. Family portraits include remarkable 17th-century ancestor, Alice Mason, with apple in hand. Garden seat under Empire console is Chinese export.

Opposite: Portrait of Abigail Adams by Gilbert Stuart, begun in 1800 and completed in 1812, cost $100 and was copied by his daughter, Jane. *Below:* Guest-room bath with Minton china toilet set bought in England at the end of the Civil War.



"One day spent at home would afford me more inward delight and comfort than a week or winter in Philadelphia."

With the election of John Adams as Vice-President and later President, the family went to a white-columned house in Richmond Hill, New York, and after to a spacious but initially unkempt house in Philadelphia. Quincy became a refuge, a summer White House offering escape from the stifling heat, the threat of a yellow-fever epidemic, and the strain of the critical press.

Dr. Tufts and Abigail's sister, Mary Cranch, looked after Quincy while they were away. They saw that the house was whitewashed, that wine was drawn from casks in the cellar, punch made by the gallon, with brandy added. They ordered the flour, loaf sugar, brown sugar, coffee, Hyson and Suchong teas, dozens of lemons, and oats. Then, because she felt they were rather crowded in Quincy, after the larger and grander houses of the past years and the more extensive staff they now maintained, Abigail embarked, in 1798, on an ambitious building program with precise provisions.

Eleven years before she had connected the kitchen to the main house and added a bedroom and an attic. Now Abigail planned with the local carpenter, Mr. Bates, the addition of an East Wing to include a drawing rom and a "Book Room" above it, each 27½ feet long and 19 feet wide. She paid for all expenses out of her monthly allowance and made sure the President did not learn about her plans until they were accomplished, and the house was "snug." "I know the President will be glad when it is done," she explained to her sister, "but he can never bear to trouble himself about anything of the kind, he has no taste for it, and he has too many publick cares to think of his own affairs."

John Adams lost the reelection to Thomas Jefferson in 1801. Though anxious about the boredom of retirement, John and Abigail soon settled in Quincy where John wrote his monumental autobiography, among other works and letters, and Abigail continued her inimitable correspondence by candlelight after her family was "fast bound."

Visiting Quincy now, one is struck by the variety of its contents, and the affectionate respect with which they have been preserved by succeeding generations. The parlor, where Abigail and John received President James Monroe, is paneled with Vassall's original dark Santo Domingo mahogany. John painted the room white after the death of Abigail, but his grandson, Charles Francis, removed the paint in 1850 and festooned the doors with sterling silver hardware. The room's most treasured *(Text continued on page 168)*

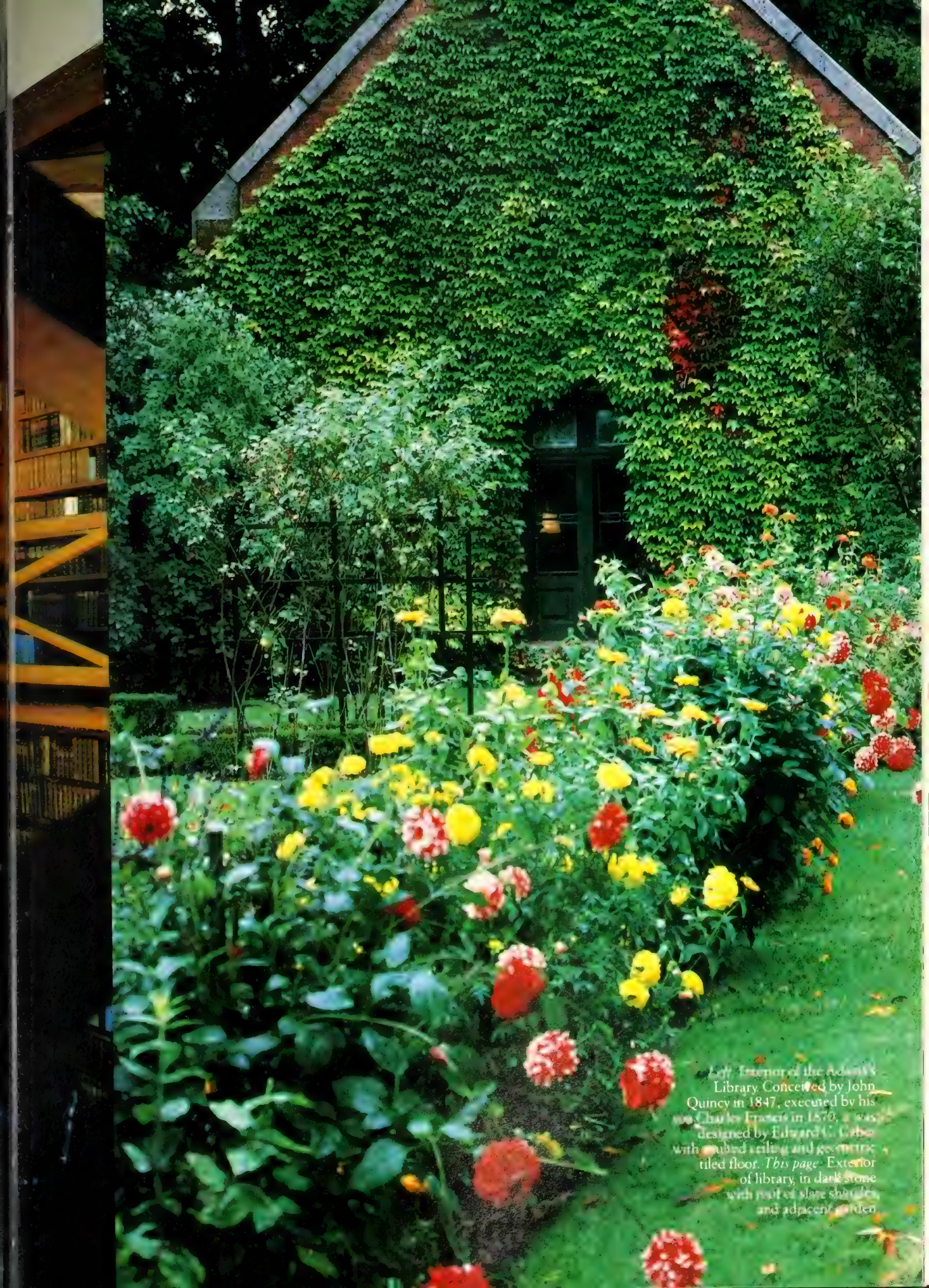




The Book Room, John Adams's study of 1800. The French desk belonged to Henry Adams, the terrestrial globes were John Quincy Adams's. Abigail imported the marble for the mantel from Philadelphia. The corner wing chair was a favorite of John's, said to be where he received friends and where he died in 1826.







Left: Interior of the Adams's Library. Conceived by John Quincy in 1847, executed by his son Charles Francis in 1870, it was designed by Edward C. Cabot with vaulted ceiling and geometric tiled floor. *This page*: Exterior of library, in dark stone with roof of slate shingles, and adjacent garden

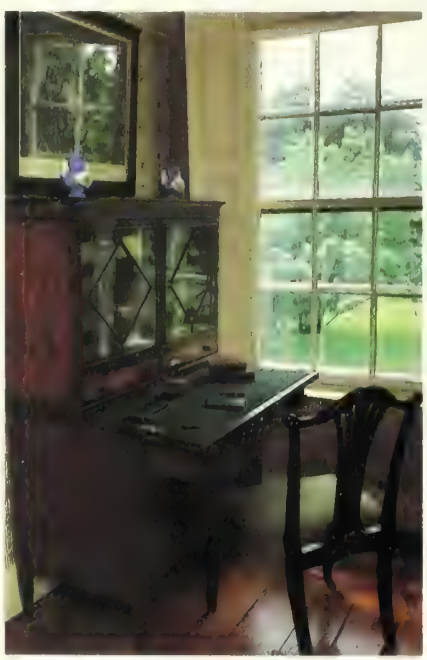
"With the election of John Adams as Vice-President and later President, Quincy became a summer White House, a refuge from the summer heat and the critical press of Philadelphia"

(Continued from page 162) piece is the American Chippendale–style sofa upholstered in crimson velvet. When he was 90 years old, John Adams sat here to have his portrait painted by Gilbert Stuart.

A young cousin makes no mention in his memoirs of the dining room's Waterford candelabras, nor the China Trade porcelain, both brought from England by Abigail. Nor does he mention Abigail's American mahogany dining table that takes on oval contours with the addition of the half-moon side tables at either end. Rather, the cousin writes of the boiled cornmeal pudding that dulled one's appetite for the "joint," and the President himself who had not "the smallest chip of an iceberg in his composition," presiding at the dinner table. The American sideboard was added by Evelyn Davis, who married the Adamses' youngest great-grandson, Brooks Adams, the last of the family to occupy the Quincy house. Edward Savage, of Worcester, Massachusetts, painted the portraits of George and Martha Washington in 1790.

A reflection of the eclectic tastes of Abigail and John is the bright and airy bedroom above the parlor. The bed is Dutch, bought by John during his stay in the Netherlands, the desk is American with Sheraton leanings, and the blue and white English tiles that rim the fireplace came as a present from John Quincy to his mother on his return from Prussia. The most diverse collections of objects and furniture brought back from trips abroad are gathered in the East Wing drawing room, or Long Room. These include a French clock, an Empire table, Austrian porcelain, provincial 17th-century family portraits, Jane Stuart's copy of her father's portrait of Abigail, an album of daguerreotypes, and Louis XV sofa and chairs bought in Europe.

The Book Room above the Long Room, which has windows on three sides and doors on the fourth, proved to be a much-used and productive sanctuary for John and his family. The French desk belonged to Henry Adams; the French secretary near the window was bought by John for the Dutch embassy and has marquetry from 19 types of wood. John Adams was sitting in the corner chair when he died on July 4, 1826, the same day as his lifelong compatriot, Thomas Jefferson.



In the master bedroom, the desk where Abigail did most of her writing and where John kept his will.

It was John Quincy whose will of 1847 inspired the building, in 1870, of the Stone Library, embedded in the corner of the garden to one side of the Old House. What must be the first Presidential library in the United States, though not officially designated so, was designed in Quincy granite by Edward C. Cabot, with a roof of slate shingles and a mostly light oak interior, tile floors, and a soaring skylight. It is filled with family portraits, furniture, mementos, more than 100 shelves of Latin, Greek, English, German, and French classics, and what Edward Everett Hale termed the "manuscript history of America," in the diaries and letters of two Presidents and one minister to England. Henry's brother, Brooks, was one of many Adamses who spent much of his day there: "I write history as though it were serious, five hours a day: and when my hand and head get tired, I step out in the rosebeds and watch my favourite roses."

The Library, the Old House, and six acres of the original land were given to the government by the family in 1947. Under the dedicated eye of the curator, Wilhelmina Sellers Harris, the house is open to the public every year from April 19 to November 10. The house is now the site of an annual family picnic, and of frequent family visits. The line perseveres with politicians, financiers, bibliophiles and philosophers, notable eccentrics and artisans. Present and future "ministers" to industry, pillars of communities from Quincy to California, among them the first female overseer at Harvard, theirs is, as a present-day Louisa Catherine said recently, "a demanding heritage, but one, after all, to tell one's children about." Not a bed of thornless roses, in Henry Adams's words, but one, it would seem, with everlasting bloom. □

Phyllis Lee Levin, formerly a reporter for The New York Times, *has completed* Footnotes to History: The Life and Times of Abigail Adams.

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(Continued from page 116) terly the Colombians, stage mixed displays mingling pot plants with cut flowers. These are shop windows for nations.

Every year, too, somewhere in the center of the Marquee, British market gardeners have their own shop window: The National Farmers Union stages a huge, lavish cooperative array of vegetables, fruit, and cut flowers.

Some of the nursery firms have shown here for decades. There are also exhibits from parks departments, and from a sprinkling of amateurs. There was also a welcome newcomer from the United States, the Pennsylvania Tercentenary Gardens Collaborative, which, setting up "A Walk Through Penn's Wood," reminded us of Anglo-American horticultural interchange for over 300 years.

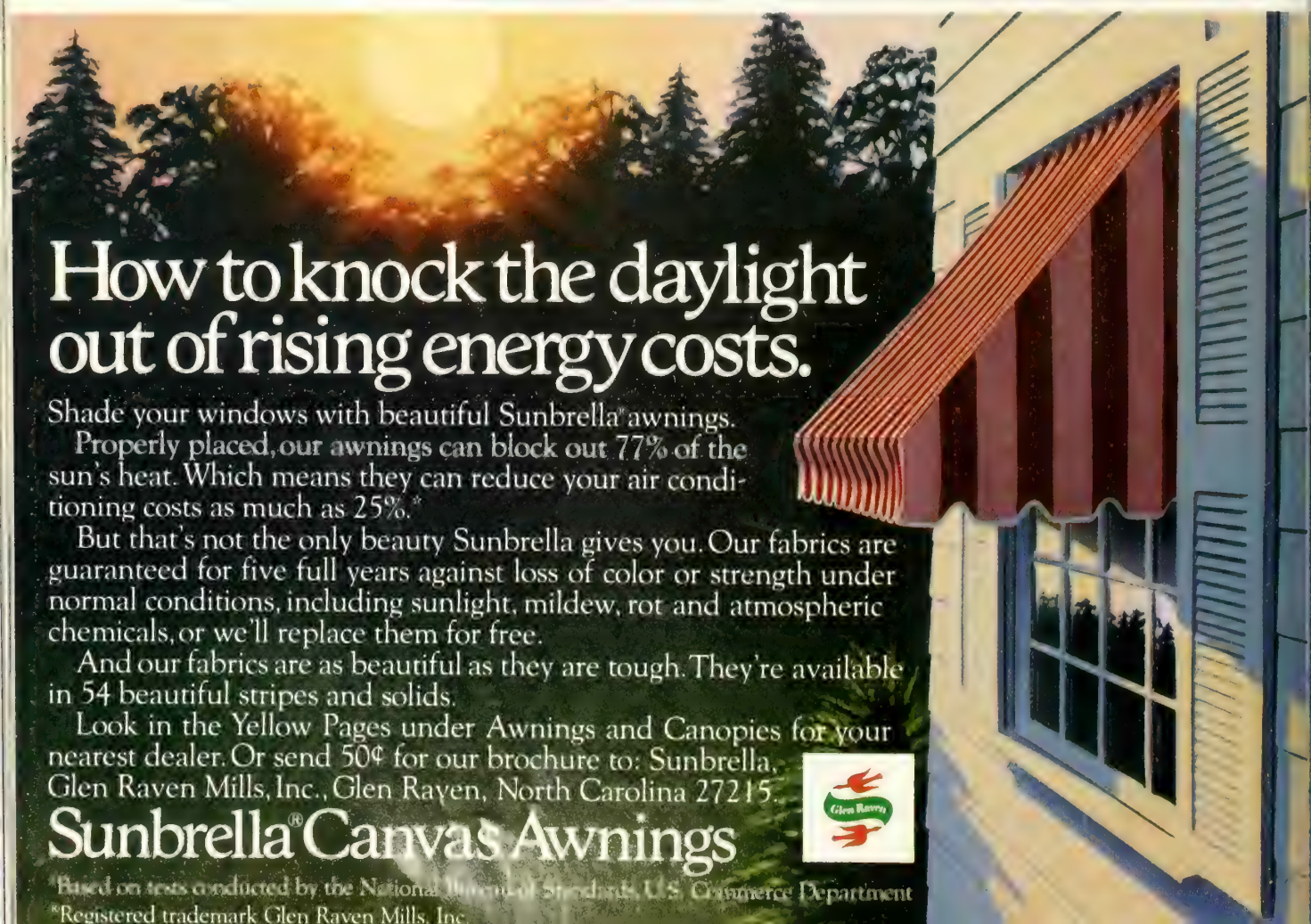
Twenty years ago the outside gardens tended to the opulent, made more for spectacle than practicality, reflecting the days of gardeners by the dozen.



Part of National Farmers' Union display

There would always be big rock gardens incorporating hundreds of tons of stone, which looked as if they had been there forever. Now the rock gardens are less impressive but more possible, and most of the others model the smaller everyday garden with terrace, summerhouse, and pool, or the enclosed town yard or "patio." The accent on leisure is reflected in labor-saving planting and design and equally in the quantities of garden furniture and ornaments on display. There are also more educative kinds of gardens from time to time—of herbs, vegetables, wild plants, and recently one for the disabled.

There is a competitive note at Chelsea, too. The Royal Horticultural Society has a number of committees of unpaid experts who judge exhibits, as they do also at the regular shows in the Westminster Horticultural Halls. A wide range of awards is made, the highest a Gold Medal. The coveted "Golds" do not just go automatically to the biggest displays: Whether a group is large *(Continued on page 174)*



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GARDENERS' PARADISE

(Continued from page 170) or small the award reflects its level of perfection for what it is. Last year an amateur's award-winning group of those American alpines, the lewisias, was only a few feet square.

The committees do their work during the Monday, and that night, when everyone else has left, the Society's Council deliberates on each award to ensure that, in its members' collective view, justice has been done.

By the Friday, despite renovations here and there, the show is becoming a little tired and those manning stands are exhausted. Closing time at 5 P.M. sees the plant exhibitors besieged, for some of them sell their plants cheaply rather than take them home. The cab ranks and bus queues outside are for a while festooned in flowers, their purchasers often beginning to wonder how they will ever get them home! Inside the grounds, packing up, clearing away, and reinstating garden sites begins. Finally the R.H.S. staff and the Royal Hospital's gardeners restore the area to its habitual appearance.

Chelsea show becomes ever more popular. In 1982 a quarter of a million people visited it, including 42,000 subscription-paying members on the Tuesday. They come from all over the country, and from overseas. The midday throng can be very dense, so for visitors a small hint: Come early or late in the day if you can.

I wonder at the end if I have put over *why* Chelsea Show is so widely acclaimed the greatest. Britain, that nation of gardeners and of innumerable local shows, also has several big provincial shows later in the year; but no one would claim they matched Chelsea. In terms of spectacle some of the great European and American shows are magnificent. But Chelsea retains its unique style and, what is in a curious way very important, a traditional feel, though exhibits change and staging improves almost imperceptibly year by year. Up to a point it is a social event, but no longer at all in "society" terms. Top-level gardeners gather here from every part of the world, and there is no doubt that this contact stimulates horticulture world-wide. □

Anthony Huxley is a member of the Council of the Royal Horticultural Society.



The lobby of the Atlantis

Continued from page 127) rut of rote repetition often the fate of neophyte architects determined to get work at any aesthetic cost, Arquitectonica has run counter to the prevailing tastes of both the architectural establishment and the avant-garde. The direction of taste transmission in American architecture today would seem to be from the bottom up, if we are to believe the evidence of Post Modernism entering the mainstream via such designs as Johnson/Burgee's AT&T Building in New York. Thus the confident architectural essays already completed by Arquitectonica, along with their impressive array of pending commissions, make the firm certain of being one of the most interesting presences on the architectural scene of the 1980s and beyond.

Whether they can take their work from its beguiling but somewhat awkward youth toward a more substantial maturity will be their major test. They have already learned how to deal successfully with large-scale developers (something that many architects never get the hang of), how to win jobs for a wide variety of building types (thereby breaking the "but-have-you-designed-a-doghouse-before?" syndrome so common in the profession), and how to cope skillfully, if not always successfully, with the compromises that are a day-to-day reality of architecture. That seems evidence enough that Arquitectonica will someday be a chaperone at the architectural party, and not just the kids doing a winning impression of Fred and Ginger. □

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STREET SMARTS VS. SMART STREETS

Once again, the idea of the open urban space, so well integrated into European life, finds resistance in a city where the street, not the plaza, is the place people relate to most. New York's Fashion Institute of Technology has taken advantage of the city's clean-air legislation, which encourages Midtown street closings, by proposing to turn the street that forms the school's "campus" into a pedestrian mall. Architects Piero Sartogo and Jon Michael Schwarting of the Design Collaborative have developed a plan for some rather assertive street furniture (pylons, kiosks, and light standards, heavily influenced by Russian Constructivist architecture) to distract attention from the undistinguished architecture of the existing F.I.T. buildings. But residents of the surrounding Chelsea district aren't so sure they'll benefit, fearing that the closed-to-traffic street might eventually become closed to the public, too. The outcome of this standoff is still uncertain. □ *Martin Filler*



Rendering of F.I.T. plaza



RETROSPECTIVE FOR A MODERN FASHION REVOLUTIONARY



Issey Miyake Spectacle—Bodyworks. *Otis Art Institute of Parsons School of Design, Los Angeles, June 15–July 17; Contemporary Art Museum, Boston, Aug. 13–Sept. 11.*

The sudden emergence of Japan as a world leader in high-style fashion is due in large part to the genius of Issey Miyake, *above,* the designer whose stunningly original clothes for both women and men remind us that fashion can be the art form that touches our lives most intimately.

Novelty is the chimera of fashion, but the new Japanese design is not so much of its time as beyond it. Miyake has taken the ancient heritage of traditional Japanese clothing design and extracted its timeless essence—simplicity, comfort, and adaptability—to create imaginative new garments that seem futuristic but not freakish. His cowl-collared tops, wraparound coats, Samurai-inspired jackets and pants, and roomy jump suits have already become uniforms for fashion adventurers around the world and suggest a logical, sensuous, and advanced way of dressing as we approach the 21st century.

Now a spectacularly mounted exhibition of Miyake's work, curated by Joan Agajanian Quinn, presents his visionary conceptions with a completeness that makes his contribution seem all the more impressive. For whether his designs adapt to the human form or alchemize it into an object of atavistic wonder, it is the body that remains his immovable inspiration. □ *M.F.*

Events of exceptional interest in the arts, design, entertainment, and living

THE UNWITHERING CHARM OF OLD BOTANICALS

Shall we compare them to a summer's day? Why not? Flower studies are as common as the lilies of the field, but a choice selection is on view through June 24 at Eyre & Hobhouse Ltd. in London. Almost 100 drawings and watercolors painted by European and Oriental artists between 1650 and 1850 make this show the perfect counterpart to the floral splendors of England in high summer. Particularly appealing are the vibrant



Tulipa Gesneriana Bicolor (striped tulip), watercolor on paper, by Jacob Marrell (1617–81).

works of several Dutch and Flemish artists of the 17th century, whose lovingly limned portraits of tulips—those treasured turbaned invaders from Turkey—make it easy to understand how the bulb mania of the 1600s turned the frugal Dutch into a nation of compulsive spendthrifts. □ *M.F.*



THE REMARKABLE MAGGIE: MORE THAN DERRING-DO

Often considered the Amelia Earhart of photographers, Margaret Bourke-White was more than just the plucky gal with a camera whose pictures epitomized the *Life* style at its gut-grabbing best. (*Above*, she is dressed for a ball in a gown made from her own photographs.) Neglected by critics since her death in 1971 at the age of 67, her career is now the focus of *For the World to See: The Life of Margaret Bourke-White* by Jonathan Silverman (Viking Studio, $46.95).

Though Bourke-White's work for the most part lacked the searing insight of her contemporary, Dorothea Lange, she did have two great gifts: a first-rate compositional sense and the go-getter instinct of the true journalist. Fate placed her in dark times, which she captured definitively for millions of Americans: We found in her powerful images of the Depression and World War II the evidence of what we were fighting for—and against. □ *M.F.*

HOLBEIN'S PROBING PORTRAIT SKETCHES

Holbein and the Court of Henry VIII. Drawings from The Royal Library at Windsor Castle. The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, through July 30.

The unique collection of 70 drawings now in the United States on special loan from England's Royal Library was King Henry VIII's equivalent of the family photo album. In a style befitting the drama and grandeur of the monarch's reign, these pages from a "great booke" depict many of the now-legendary men and women who created and endured the upheavals of Henry's epic life. Sir Thomas More, Queen Jane Seymour, and William Warham, the Archbishop of Canterbury, are among the ensemble whose eyes return the gaze of visitors to the Morgan Library. With such a glittering cast of characters (most of them already stars of stage and screen via Robert Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons*), the subject matter alone is sufficient to guarantee these pictures a place in history. No other European court has been recorded in such depth. However, what raises these images from historical mementos to the status of art is the hand that made them, which belonged to one of the Court's more special employees, the great portrait painter Hans Holbein the Younger.



James Butler, Earl of Ormonde by Holbein

Born in Augsburg in 1497, the son of a painter, Hans Holbein spent his career crisscrossing Europe, absorbing elements of both Northern and Southern portrait styles. A sojourn in Basel from 1515 to 1517 resulted in



Cecily Heron by Holbein

friendship with Erasmus, and this, in turn, led to a letter of introduction from the great Humanist to Sir Thomas More. During the years of his first visit to England (1526–28), Holbein may have resided in More's home in Chelsea. Certainly the number of portraits of Sir Thomas's family and friends—including that exquisite statement of femininity, the drawing of More's youngest daughter, Cecily Heron—attests to the politician's regard for the young artist. Eventually this sponsorship extended to an introduction to the King; with his involvement with the Court starting in 1533, Holbein began his greatest creative period. The painter was called upon not only to render images of English royalty, but also to supervise a large studio that produced copies of his work for dissemination throughout the many residences of the aristocracy. On at least two occasions, Holbein was even used as stand-in for the King's eyes (and heart?) when Henry dispatched the artist to the Continent in 1538 and again a year later to produce portraits of prospective brides.

Obviously Holbein's work required diplomacy as well as speed and talent. His subjects expected the likenesses he produced to be realistic *and* flattering, rarely an easy combination. In addition, Holbein's clientele had little time to sit for their portraits, usually giving the artist only a few hours. All the more remarkable, then, that Holbein did not work from existing portraits of the Court, as was common at that time. He based his pictures on his own observation only, often beginning by tracing an outline of the sitter's head on glass for transfer to drawing paper. Once he set to work on the images, done on white or pink paper, Holbein rapidly developed facial features using colored chalk and ink applied with pen or brush. His more fully developed pieces then received touches of watercolor, revealing his exceptional color sense. The salmon shade of the headdress on the drawing of Mary Zouch, for example, is a surprising choice against the pink background, but it creates a halo effect around her head that softens her features and calls attention to her blue eyes.

Since these drawings were intended as the basis for oil paintings, Holbein was free to develop the picture only to the point he felt necessary. He even made notations about color and costume on the margins of the paper. As a result, there is an immediacy and vividness about these portraits. Because Holbein's process is not concealed, the drawings have a freshness and modernity that is unexpected in pictures of this vintage. Furthermore, because Holbein was forced to record his first impression of a sitter, he did not rely on mannerisms of style or the stock tricks of that period's portraiture. These faces are made beautiful by the painter's mastery of his craft, but they also reveal character. The angle of the head, the expression of the eyes, and the shape of the mouth are all closely observed and persuasively recorded. The result is that the hand and eye of the artist effects a powerful transformation. Holbein provokes a surprisingly intimate encounter with people who, only minutes before, had seemed little more than distant figures from a remote past. □

Mary Ann Tighe

A FINE TV TREATMENT FOR "SONS AND LOVERS"



Masterpiece Theatre's presentation of D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* is a bittersweet experience—a thought-provoking drama and well-executed for everyone, familiar with the book or not.

The seven-part series, adapted by Trevor Griffiths, is the story of the Morel family, specifically the possessive bond between Mrs. Morel and her son, Paul, which she believes to be proper family love and loyalty. The effect on young Paul is a sort of emotional retardation, tinged with guilt when he tries to form relationships with other women.

The performances by Karl Johnson as Paul and Eileen Atkins as Mrs. Morel *(below left)* are superbly understated and played out on a convincingly dreary background of the mining town of Nottingham. The watercolors in the opening titles create some of the loveliest credits in recent memory. On PBS, beginning May 15. □

Gabrielle Winkel

LISTENING AGAIN TO THE LEAST OF THE "3 B'S"

And then there's Brahms. Chances are that his anniversary (he was born 150 years ago May 7) will more or less slide by—at least by contrast with the media hoopla for the Wagner centennial. There will be the obligatory obeisances: festivals, symposiums, and the like, and recordings (as if the world needed another set of the symphonies or concertos to pad out the dozens already at hand). If the world really became famished for the sight and sound of Brahms, we could always take in a movie: Robert Walker as Uncle Johannes, making googoo eyes at Katharine Hepburn's Clara Schumann in a steamy epic from 1947 called *Song of Love;* Tony Perkins administering similar ocular therapy to Ingrid Bergman in the 1961 *Goodbye Again,* that being Hollywood's renaming of Françoise Sagan's *Aimez vous Brahms?* The question, as always in

Continued on page 180

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poor Brahms will survive his own anniversary, but whether the rest of us will.

Don't misunderstand: J'aime Brahms as well as the next fellow. It's simply that there's nothing much that can happen during an anniversary year for Brahms that wouldn't happen in any other year. Any conductor worthy of his podium has known from his cradle that a shot of Brahms does wonders for underscoring the mellow, robust middle of his orchestra's tone . . . does wonders also for sending the customers out with a feeling of having dined long and well. There are no neglected Brahmsian masterpieces crying for revival, no controversial scores to be clarified by a novel approach. It's hard to believe, in fact, that there

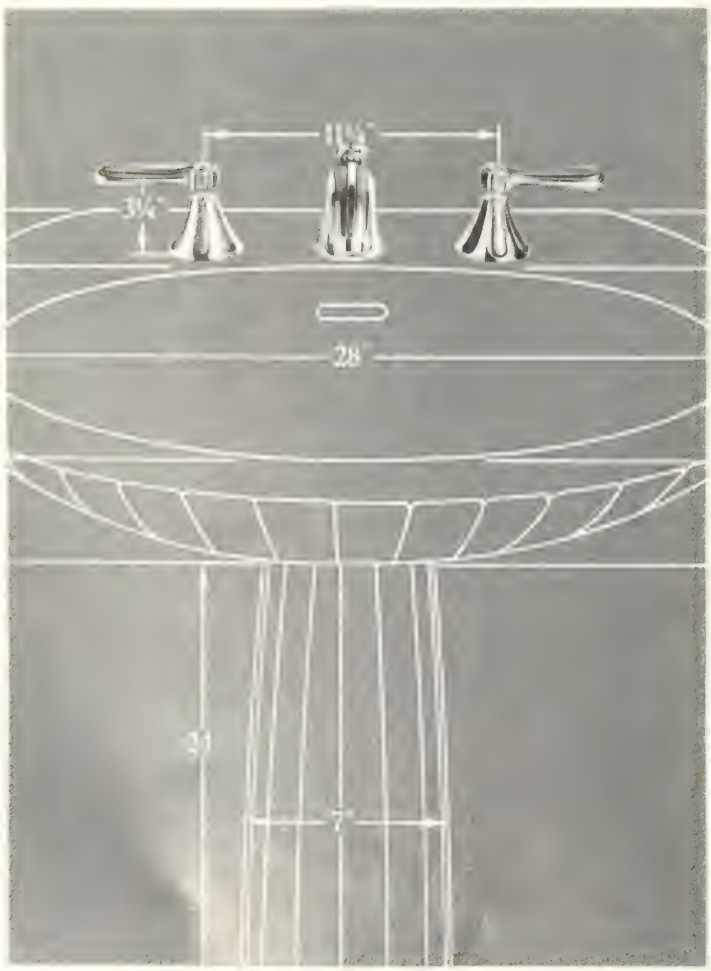


Brahms out for a stroll

was a time when controversy *did* swirl around the shy, clumsy, retiring figure of Brahms, when the musical world found itself forced by its more flamboyant yea- and nay-sayers into taking sides between the stolid conservatism of Brahms and the dashing iconoclasm of Wagner. Yet the evidence abounds: George Bernard Shaw, for example, the self-confessed "perfect Wagnerite," writing of Brahms that "the German Requiem is endured patiently only by the corpse." But when Shaw's collected criticisms from the 1890s were reprinted in the 1930s, the great sage had mellowed, and the Brahms tirades are now interspersed with apologetic footnotes. A century later, when the music of both Brahms and Wagner has become the stuff of common artistic experience, it is no longer easy to determine which of the two composers embodies the spirit of rebellion and which the essence of reaction.

Brahms persists in our affections, most of all because of the extraordinary mingling in his music of structure and content. The immense driving power of his grandest designs—the broad, sweeping tunes that begin his last two symphonies, for example—leaves us breathless; what is even more amazing is the intricacy of their construction, the way Brahms works with the smallest shreds of musical thought and weaves them into a seamless fabric. A seemingly insignificant figure in an accompaniment to one melody later works itself up to the surface to become an important new idea. This subtle, intricate, marvelously controlled unfolding of his

Continued on page 183



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A lovely Oriental floral motif in rich gold-on-crimson created during the reign of Shogun Iyesyoshi (1837-1853).

material is what gives Brahms's music so much of its momentum; his command over the elements of his language works upon us almost subliminally, but inexorably.

There is, therefore, a lot more to Brahms than the mellow, orchestral colors of his customary palette. His music is popular with audiences because it's beautiful; it's popular with performers because, up to a point, it's easy to perform: The rhetoric of its pure sound is irresistible. Beyond that point, however, Brahms probably contains more pitfalls per square inch than any other composer of comparable renown. The truly great exponents of his music are a phenomenal ear for balance, and an equally phenomenal ability to project from the first note of a performance a sense of the size of the whole design. In this regard, I would suggest that the old set of the Brahms symphonies under Arturo Toscanini (RCA VIC-6400) is an even better measure of the visionary powers of that legendary conductor than his more highly touted Beethoven recordings. Among newer recordings, it is again the unlikely combination of the Italian temperament in a performer and the robust Northern romanticism in the music itself that produces outstanding results: Claudio Abbado's serenely beautiful, spacious recordings on DG of the Second (2535292), Third (2535293), and Fourth (2535360) Symphonies, and Maurizio Pollini's brainy and vibrant readings of the two piano concertos (DG 2707127). There is also an extraordinary recent performance of the Second Symphony with Carlo Maria Giulini and the Los Angeles Philharmonic (DG 2532014): mellower than the Abbado reading, more responsive to the gentle rhetoric of the first two movements. (Giulini's broad, dramatic reading of the sprawling First Symphony [2532056], which I have heard many times in person, has also been recorded by DG.) These are cornerstone performances for any record collection, a Brahms celebration in themselves that this year's celebrants will be hard-pressed to surpass. □ *Alan Rich*

THE AVOWED FINALE OF A CINEMATIC MASTER

Near the beginning of Ingmar Bergman's *Fanny & Alexander* there is a huge Christmas banquet, and just near the end of the movie is another banquet—this time held in celebration of the birth of twins, about two years later. Bergman, who was born in 1918, says that *Fanny & Alexander* will be his last film—that in the future he is going to confine himself to operatic and theatrical direction and perhaps to some work for television. I am inclined therefore to take seriously those framing banquet scenes as clues to Bergman's mood on bidding farewell to his audience after 43 films. The first thing one notices about *Fanny & Alexander* is what a mixture of styles and preoccupations it is.

In this 3-hour-and-17-minute movie, Bergman has summed up many of his themes, and he works in all of his familiar modes—dreamlike, theatrical, magical, confessional, and so on—one after the other, with little attempt to resolve the discrepancies or pull all the themes into any kind of unity. In brief, the movie is a banquet, a veritable groaning board of cinematic goodies, and I don't think we are meant to look for consistency, unity, proportion, or harmony in it, anymore than we would at a banquet. "Feast and be content!" the director seems to be saying. "Life and art thrive on bounteousness, not discipline or economy."

Continued on page 184





Bishop Edvard Vergerus (Jan Malmsjo) and pregnant Emilie Ekdahl (Ewa Froling) confront the collapse of their marriage.

Bergman sets his movie in his home town, Uppsala, in 1907. In a vast mansion in the center of the city, the generations of the Ekdahl family gather together. The matriarch, Helena (Gunn Wallgren), is a former actress, now a widow. Helena may be Bergman's most movingly generous tribute to acting: She is clear-sighted enough to see that all of life consists of role-playing, yet she is too wise and too self-respecting to let that perception turn her into a cynic.

Helena has three middle-aged sons. The oldest, Oscar (Allan Edwall), is also an actor, and he manages the family-owned theater near the mansion. The second son, Gustav Adolf (Jarl Kulle), is an effusive restaurant owner and businessman and also a tirelessly active seducer of the young servants in the house. The third, Carl (Borje Ahlstedt), is a professor always in debt—a bitter, nasty, self-lacerating failure. These three, all of whom live in the mansion with their children and servants, not only represent three of the major possibilities of life, but also hark back to some memorable Bergman characters of the past.

Perhaps because some of them work in the theater, Bergman appears to love the members of this upper-class family—there's a richness in their speech and gesture missing from his modern characters. The actor son, Oscar, playing *Hamlet,* has a stroke on stage and expires in the mansion in one of Bergman's most harrowing death scenes. Oscar then becomes a ghost—he appears, dressed in a beautiful white suit, to his mother, to his wife, and to his son, Alexander (Bertil Guve), a proud, silent boy about 10 years old.



Pernilla Allwin and Bertil Guve as Fanny and Alexander

Alexander is almost certainly Bergman's version of himself—a liar and a dreamer. In a word, an artist. His sister, Fanny, a placidly beautiful blonde child, will grow into the kind of beautiful, responsive woman whom Bergman has admitted to needing all his life.

After Oscar dies, his beautiful widow marries the town's bishop, Edvard Vergerus (Jan Malmsjo), a handsome façade of a man whose perfect appearance covers a sadistic temperament. The scene shifts—from the Ekdahl's sumptuous mansion to the horribly austere bishop's palace—and so does the mood and tempo. Now Bergman makes a comic, gothic variant of *Hamlet,* with the widow as Gertrude, the bishop as Claudius, and young Alexander, who dreams of killing his stepfather, as Hamlet. After the slow-moving expansiveness of the opening, Bergman now gives us short, violent scenes, increasingly melodramatic, with lightning flashes and thunder rolls; surely the super-sophisticated Bergman, by reveling in hokum, is telling us we shouldn't look down on melodrama and suspense, the fundament of narrative art. The Ekdahls are rescued—I shall not tell you how—and the scene and tone shift again; suddenly Bergman takes us back to such metaphysical films as *The Magician* and *The Seventh Seal.*

And so it goes, course after course, a banquet without end. From this welter of material—some inspired, some beautifully mounted but conventional, some positively bad—a number of related themes emerge. At the end of his career, Bergman seems to be trying to reverse the ancient prejudice against actors. The grandmother who plays many roles is a saint; the bishop, who, as he says, "has only one mask" is a self-righteous tyrant. The actor's adaptability is not a form of insincerity, as Plato held, but a heightened readiness for life. For life is many-sided, a plenitude. Bergman brings his actors to that final banquet in triumph; he wants to bring us all to the banquet in triumph. □

David Denby

(*Continued from page 88*) therefore a conveniently empty vessel into which the instruction offered by the reigning things can be poured without effort.

But what are the things, the spoils, so ardently brought to Poynton by the palpitating acceptances and rejections of Mrs. Gereth? Here, a descriptive difficulty is likely to inhibit the novelist. In his plot, cabinets, rugs, boxes, and tables are instruments. Their actual shape and hue can be a rather tedious challenge. Charm, workmanship, and a reasonable sort of rarity are asserted. The plot is concrete, but the things themselves are generalized, seen in the gross, as it were.

When we first enter Poynton, Mrs. Gereth addresses the girl who is free to develop "natural taste" because large lacks have saved her from bad taste, by saying with emotion, "Now do you know how I feel?" The line, spoken in the entrance hall as the door is flung open, is the utterance of the perfectionist, the patient and prudent artist of the household. The eye is directed to the discrete vision prepared for it and in this instance there will be no fear of inattention, of the wounds of the hurried, dreaded "formulas of admiration," as James calls them.

But, again, what precisely are the things? As you turn the pages in pursuit you find a Spanish altar cloth, a Venetian lamp that lights up "an admirable tapestry." There is "the great Italian cabinet" and a "sofa dressed in old velvet brocade." And at the end, the supreme *find*, a Maltese cross, "a small but marvelous crucifix, of ivory, a masterpiece of delicacy, of expression and of the great Spanish period."

The crippled execution of the objects does not diminish our belief that the things are fine, handsome, difficult to come by, and assembled with strong emotion. The hesitant description is part of the experience gained in the writing of prose fiction, an experience that understands the forlorn inexactitude of adjectives and rhythms trying to stand for themselves alone, separated from the psychological rope that attaches them to feelings and actions of human beings.

Mrs. Gereth is a morally ambiguous person in the novel because the possessions have made of her an analyst too complicated (*Continued on page 186*)

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"Henry James's *The Spoils of Poynton* is a peculiar drama of windswept objects buffeted about by a storm of desire, fear, exigency"

(Continued from page 185) and angular for ease. They have told her that she can leave nothing to chance and that, if one would perpetuate a setting, a far-reaching control over recalcitrant persons must be attempted with all the beady-eyed attention to detail that formerly operated only in old antiques shops. But she is not despicable in her desperate attentiveness. She is right, in terms of the novel, to see the "dreadful" house of the approaching daughter-in-law as the emblem of a corrupt sensibility. Her own "beautiful things" suggest a Platonic, if flawed, connection to Beauty. She may be monstrous on behalf of the ideal, but there is pathos in her inevitable defeat. The things will without fail attach themselves to the indifferent daughter-in-law who will want them, insist upon them, if only because they are "hers" by way of the will of the elder Mr. Gereth. The spoils are transferred, left to be watched over by negligent, newly hired caretakers, and the house burns down. So, what you have at last is not a tragedy, but rather a bitterness of experience.

D. H. Lawrence wrote a brief story called "Things," which is about a young couple from New England, "with a little money," who go at the end of World War I to live in France and then Italy. They want to be free among beautiful surroundings and to make of themselves a sort of creation. They begin to buy things, a way as they see it to absorb the essence of Europe. Their Florentine apartment is carefully done and charming, and their acquisitions seem for a time a renovation of themselves, erasing their American roots.

Again the "things" are of a generalized value and attractiveness. "Curtains of queer ancient material that looked like finely knitted silk, most beautifully faded down to a sheer soft glow." They have a Venetian book case, a Bologna cupboard; they have bronzes, fine tables and chairs "picked up in Paris." But at last they grow bored with their setting, with Europe, and they return to America, where their income will not allow a place large enough for the things, which must then go into storage. The husband is forced to go to work and the couple ends up in "their up-to-date little house on the campus of Cleveland University and that woebegone debris of Europe, Bologna cupboard, Venice bookcase, Ravenna bishop's chair, Louis Quinze side tables, all were arrayed, and all looked perfectly out of keeping, and therefore very impressive."

Lawrence is hard on his New England couple with their dreamy "idealism," their superficial culture, their proneness to disappointment in the rock-hard, ancient European character that will not long correspond to their picturesque sentiments. In this story, the "things" are not the object of tragic obsession as they are with the mistress of Poynton. Still, in the descriptive generality one might note that the young couple's objects are similar and that the listing of them will furnish the mind with only the shadow of materiality. Chests and curtains are visual, and only some extraordinary attribution to which we, the reader, attach value can confer substantially on the page.

Balzac's Cousin Pons is a collector of a different degree. He is an innocent, harmless assembler of genuine masterpieces, and the collection will turn him into a humble, suffering victim of the greed and predatory fury of others. Pons is an ugly, aged, impoverished man, a failed composer, with some good, but not very forthcoming, family connections. Pons has only one vice and that is the love of good food, which he cannot provide himself and must seek at the usually unfriendly table of relatives and former friends.

His passion for collecting had begun long ago with a *Prix de Rome* that did not make him a famous composer. Still, Rome itself turned him into a collector, a shrewd and passionate one of small means and certain scrupulosities, one of which was that "the finest object in the world had no existence, so far as he was concerned, if its price was 300 francs." By persevering for 40 years, Pons has assembled over 1,700 specimens. At first we hear of credible bibelots, minia- *(Continued on page 188)*

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"Balzac's Cousin Pons is an innocent, harmless assembler of genuine masterpieces and the collection will turn him into a humble, suffering victim of the greed and predatory fury of others"

(Continued from page 186) tures, and snuff boxes. And we accept the delicate little fan, painted by Watteau, and offered to a scornful, ignorant relation in the hope that she will continue to let him dine at her house. The plot is set by the Watteau fan.

If other novelists may be thought of as embarrassed in the face of reputed treasures and therefore remote and vague about their shape and ornamentation, Balzac is very much the opposite. On the wages of his appalling industry as a writer, he had pursued "curiosities" himself with a rather haphazard elation.

As the story of Cousin Pons proceeds we find that he is the owner of 68 pictures, 14 statues, large buffets holding bric-a-brac, sideboards covered with the "choicest treasures of human toil—ivories, bronzes, carvings, enamels, jewelry, porcelains," and on and on. It is when we come to the masterpieces that we feel there has been a laying on because their names promote visions and values in no need of description.

Among the pictures are a Chardin, a Hobbema, a Fra Bartolommeo, a Dürer, a Knight of Malta portrait by Sebastian del Piomba. Later we learn there is a Greuze, a Breughel, a Claude Lorrain, and a Metzu. And so poor Pons, a man of perfect, almost feckless innocence and loneliness, has indeed been a sort of Catherine the Great with his 100-franc deals. We may question the author's wisdom or see it perhaps as unedited enthusiasm.

The old bachelor's inner life is not ruled by his collection to the detriment of other sentiments. His passion does not appear to be directed toward the world; he is not making a perfect country house or a thrilling Florentine apartment. The things are treasured for themselves—and even that is not quite accurate. We do not know why Pons, doomed to be the leader of a small theater orchestra and accepting the fate with modesty, should have in his youth been so greatly alert. He is not to be thought of as the weaver Silas Marner, with his little hoard of secret gold coins to brighten his lonely evenings.

The quality of the collection of Pons we have to accept as in some sense accidental in spite of his shrewdness and endurance. Perhaps the accumulation is to be connected with his *gourmandise,* that need which lets him sit unwanted at tables weighted with the excess wines, fowl, desserts, and liquors of the Empire. Balzac says that "his small means and his passion for bric-a-brac condemned him to an ascetic diet abhorrent to his hankering appetite."

The fate of the 1,700 specimens will have nothing to do with the wishes of Pons. Instead he is almost murdered by the collection and can see death only as a relief from the torments it has brought to his bedside in the person of a criminal concierge, a malicious lawyer and a crafty dealer, and, of course, his unworthy relations, who finally secure it and use it as a tribute to themselves as if it had been they who were the origin of it.

Treasures do not fare well in fiction. There is something of a dangerous hidden hoard about them and they leave behind them at best an ironical twist and at the worst the triumph of the wicked over the good.

Taste, of course, is the element that gives the "bric-a-brac" its dramatic power. And taste is not a characteristic with the firmness of courage, loyalty, or honesty. Its arena of consequence is limited. In Swann, Proust created a man of taste, knowledge, and refinement who touches our deepest feelings when he deviates from his own standards under the domination of carnal passion. For Odette, his ignorant, shallow, and beautiful love, he cannot alter the pure contents of his mind, but he can, by way of the devices of the connoisseur, grow into an almost pleasurable acceptance of Odette and "that bad taste which she displayed on every possible occasion."

Odette sees the interesting and complicated aristocrat, the Marquise de Villeparisis, in the street wearing a black woolen dress and a bonnet with strings. She cries out, "But she looks like a lavatory attendant. . . . You'd have to pay me money before you'd get me to go around Paris rigged out like that." Swann will need to bow to that, with, of course, a pained smile.

In fiction, the pretentious and the ambitious are usually denied an understanding of genuine simplicity and they are inclined to make outstanding mistakes of "placement" when confronted with it. In the same way, the carefully ordered "things" at Poynton and the Watteau fan, "a little trifle," offered by Pons live in the world with all the vulnerability to bruise and rejection of living creatures. They are actors in a morality play. And yet the acquisitions of Lawrence's young couple and the spoils of Poynton are at last only objects. Pons's snuff boxes and miniatures, among which his not entirely believable masterpieces reside, are also objects. The morality is ambiguous. The pain of the denouement, the final distribution, you might call it, arises from the way in which the human contract has been strained and things and persons confused as in a troubled dream. □

Elizabeth Hardwick is a novelist and literary critic. Her new collection of essays, Bartleby in Manhattan, *has just been published by Random House.*

Books mentioned by Elizabeth Hardwick:
The Spoils of Poynton, Henry James, Penguin; *Cousins Pons,* Honoré de Balzac, Penguin; *Remembrance of Things Past,* Marcel Proust, Random House; "Things," D. H. Lawrence (from *Lovely Lady*), out of print.



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(Continued from page 136) portraits posing for a photographer." It is this quality, more than any other, that assures the work's status as an aesthetic manifesto rather than a mere, casual "slice of life." And if Fantin-Latour omitted the nude allegorical figure of Truth to make his point about the necessity for honest confrontation of reality in art, he nevertheless included a group of significant objects on the bright red tabletop to the left, objects that give a symbolic resonance to his portrait. The figurine of a "Greek Minerva" suggests the purity of Greek style, and hence Truth in the Western tradition—just what Fantin, Manet, and their friends were fighting for—while a ceramic pot in the Japanese style next to it stands for the newly discovered verities of Oriental art, much admired by Fantin and associates, who, at this time, were meeting in the "Jing-Jar Society" to talk about the beauty of things Japanese. If *A Studio in the Batignolles Quarter* is on one level a "precious document of friendship," as Astruc called it, it is on another a profession of artistic faith. As Astruc said of Fantin-Latour, "He is the slave of his convictions. He admires and fights for his opinions like a writer."

And indeed, it was to writers that Fantin turned for the subject of his final group portrait celebrating the triumph of modernity, *A Corner of the Table* of 1872. Although it may look like a completely casual record of a contemporary gathering, perhaps the aftermath of a dinner of the convivial "Affreux Bonshommes" ("The Terrible Fellows")—an informal group of independent writers, it is nevertheless based on the compositional strategies of that most traditional of group portraitists, Frans Hals, who had often used the pretext of the dinner meeting to capture the likenesses of the assembled burghers of 17th-century Holland. If Verlaine and Rimbaud had been willing to pose for him—although even this fact is uncertain; Fantin may have painted them from memory—many others among their literary confreres were not anxious to be represented in a group that included this *louche* duo. Indeed, one minor literary figure, Mérat, had to be quickly replaced by an arrangement of flowers in the right-hand corner, and he was not alone in his refusal to participate: Fantin, in talking about the painting,

constantly referred to a dozen figures. The final cast of characters includes only eight—and a big bouquet.

After the Franco-Prussian War, and what he considered to be the radical excesses of the Commune in 1871, Fantin-Latour found himself increasingly alienated from both the ideas and the creations of his vanguard friends. He felt they were out to destroy the cultural traditions of a past that he had come to treasure more and more, along with the solid verities of middle-class existence. In the '70s, he turned for portrait subjects to the private, tranquil world of women and the family, rather than the public, combative one of professional art production.

One such commemoration of domestic tranquility is *Portraits: The Drawing Lesson* of 1879, a representation of Louise Riesener, daughter of the painter Léon Riesener, who had recently died, and her friend, Mlle. Callimahi-Catargi. Here, Fantin takes up once more the theme of the double feminine portrait, which he had treated twice before in the past, once in the portraits of his two sisters in the '50s and later in *Reading*, a portrait of his future wife, Victoria Dubourg, and her lovely sister, Charlotte, in 1870. How different from the spacious atelier of Manet is the protected, domesticated corner in which the two young women work, one of them engaged in painting the portrait of the other, the second absorbed in recording the plaster-cast propped up on the table. The sense of protective enclosure is reinforced by the presence of the warm red screen behind the seated figure and the looming red-white-and-blue-striped tabletop in the foreground: These young women are literally embraced by their surroundings, their space barricaded off from that of the viewer.

Yet, if these are at once charming, realistically rendered, young middle-class Parisiennes, diligently at work on their art lesson in the privacy of the studio, they are, at the same time, somber, dark-clad priestesses of the religion of Art, adoring their God at his shrine. Fantin-Latour was dedicated to "the worship of Art—the only ideal," as he had once termed it: It is simply that the temple is now a private one. The lovely young redhead is represented sketching a cast of the detached head of Michelangelo's *Dying Slave* from the Louvre, a common enough studio accessory at the time but one with a particular meaning for Fantin: It was both a symbol of the art of painting itself and of his own dissatisfaction in relation to it. For Fantin, who burned to create great masterpieces, was forced by circumstances to turn out still lifes in order to make a living. "While I paint them, I think of Michelangelo as I confront the peonies and roses; this cannot go on," he wrote, depressed and discouraged in 1862. A deeply personal meaning, then, may inform the seemingly accidental juxtaposition of Michelangelo's noble, suffering *Dying Slave* fragment with the pot of rhododendrons, the fallen roses: Far from being a mere still-life motif, it refers to Fantin-Latour's own feelings of inner conflict and revolt, an emblem of his desire to identify with Michelangelo's grandeur while ignobly enslaved to the production of roses and peonies for the English market.

In point of *(Continued on page 192)*

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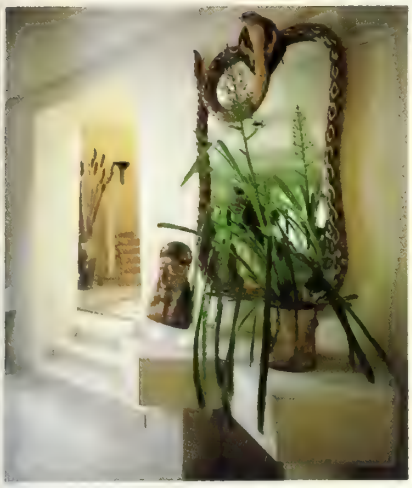
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(Continued from page 191) fact, still life meant more to Fantin than a mere way of gaining his living. In front of fruit and flowers, he could experiment with problems of pure form, composition, and color in a way that was impossible in his portrait painting. Yet there is a link between the portraits and the still lifes. In a work like the *Still Life With Flowers* of 1869, one finds that extreme insistence on the individual elements, on the separate identity of jonquils, strawberries, and camellias, that singular lack of interest in the relationship among the separate elements that characterized *A Studio in the Batignolles Quarter*. Fantin selected this work as an engagement present for his fiancée, Victoria Dubourg, herself a talented painter of flowers, so it must have meant a good deal to him, and indeed, there is something moving, even exhilarating, about Fantin's forthright presentation of strawberries, cherries, flowers, and glass, his relish of the sensuous, creamy texture of the camellia petals, the delicacy of his touch among the pale pink hyacinths and the stock. Nothing could be more different, however, from that notion embodied in Cézanne's still lifes, of the motif as a problem in pictorial relationships, an emblem of the perpetual struggle between the structure of paint on the canvas and the claims of the perceived object. In Cézanne's triumphant still lifes of the '80s and '90s, it is this tension that has become the point of the painting. But by that time, Fantin was dedicating himself to still another enterprise—his lithographed series of Wagnerian subjects, consecrating his love of another art form: music. In these filmy, evocative images in black and white, Fantin turns back to Romantic tradition and inward to his own imagination and predicts the next major movement of the epoch: Symbolism, which, like his own later creation, draws its inspiration not from external reality, but from music, myth, and dreams. Instead of "being of his times," the Realist watchword, Fantin ends up, paradoxically as always, being both behind and ahead of time, at the same time. □

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Snakeskin-framed mirror, one of two in living room.

(Continued from page 107) adult, financially. This one she believes represents everything she's always fantasized. This is her, an accumulation of thoughts forced on me by her."

The kitchen is devoid of appliances, a homage to green granite, rush weave, and rough plaster. Looking out through the window at some of the 70 imported palms and what Ron calls "Egyptian plant material" desired by Cher, you could imagine the infant Moses nestling among the papyrus reeds—which are indeed native to California.

As a matter of fact a book derivative of the film *Jesus of Nazareth*, released about six years ago, exercised a powerful influence on Cher throughout the construction of the house. "It was a book," Wilson says, "showing a tremendous amount of exciting but very crude architecture. She used that book like a bible when doing this house. It shows wonderful reed and straw ceilings." Cher's ambition to have the kitchen in Galilean Rustic was defeated by Wilson and Grenzbach. One rough plaster wall remains to show, as Wilson says, the integrity and correctness of her original vision.

A graceful stairway carries one up to a loggia, where there is some very beautiful American Indian jewelry in display cases. A few more steps in one direction and we are looking at the bedrooms of her two children, Chastity and Elijah Blue. Past a guest room in the other direction we come upon Cher's bedroom.

It certainly is striking. A bed, embowered in what seem to be black-and-gold-threaded lamé curtains, is imposingly raised on a stone platform. In a gesture of nostalgia for the Valley of the Kings, the granite-seeming walls are in fact covered with fine gravel backed by paper. A print of a strong Tamara de Lempicka *Autoportrait* gazes down from above the mantelpiece. The atmosphere is of an elegiac romanticism, lush and somewhat melancholy, with the aroma of Cleopatra at the moment of her encounters both with Anthony and the asp.

The whole house is indeed rather a paean to Glorious Asp-erama. The main reception room has two Wilson-designed mirrors surrounded by snakes, boa skin applied to carved wood and topped with king cobra heads. Snake spiral lamps and candle sconces catch the serpentine echo. A marble cobra coils in the atrium. The bedroom terrace rails and moat rails below are punctuated by twisting snake bars. As a climax the iron rails supporting her bed curtains were intended to have serpents crawling on them. "We couldn't get them to work," Wilson said sadly.

Bathrooms of the stars are generally imposing temples dedicated to the upkeep and inspection of the human form, and Cher's is no exception—a fulsome homage to travertine, Caracalla, '30s mirror styles, and 20th-century technology. Sun worship, at least in the form of nude sunbathing on the roof, is now crimped by the erection of a house across the canyon from which the curious could indiscreetly gaze.

The rain was stopping and Los Angeles, always at its best after a rainstorm, was beginning to gleam. Cher's children were watching television upstairs, and the live-in couple were tending the already immaculate premises. The canyon was blushing in the tenderest of late afternoon greens. Against that natural life outside, framed by the Tut portal, the first-floor space felt very emptied of human presence. "Cher loves to look at it," Wilson said. "It gives her tremendous pleasure to walk through rooms she owns. It always has. But she doesn't use them as we would use rooms. She loves it, but she'll sell it and then it will be over." □

Alexander Cockburn writes for The Village Voice, The Wall Street Journal, *and* The New York Review of Books.



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DOMESTICATING THE VOLCANO

A romantic obsession with the wild and sublime created the ultimate folly

By Christopher Thacker

An 18th-century pastime: spectators watching Vesuvius erupt, as in this nocturnal view commissioned from Pietro Fabris by vulcanologist Sir William Hamilton.

In the second half of the 18th century, French formal gardens had been largely discredited, and the new English landscape gardens had become more and more "natural." Indeed, some were even *wild,* incorporating that fearsome yet thrilling quality of the sublime which Edmund Burke had explained to the public in 1756 in his *Philosophical Enquiry Into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful.* As the fashion advanced, some gardens grew wilder and wilder, until they embraced the ultimate and hitherto unthinkable in wildness, the volcano.

Sir William Hamilton (1730–1803), who was posted to Naples as British envoy in 1764, did much to increase interest in volcanoes. In the next 15 years, Vesuvius erupted frequently, and Hamilton became a passionate vulcanologist, ascending Mount Vesuvius over 200 times, and acquiring Villa Angelica on the lower slopes near Portici, from which he observed the eruptions easily, and where he entertained many friends and visitors, who, like himself, were interested in the volcano. Hamilton himself wrote copiously on the subject.

Hamilton saw the volcano with the eyes of a *philosophe.* It was for him a part of the material world, exceptional maybe but still a phenomenon to be studied, measured, and understood. It was also a unique background for his other interests: archaeology, music, literature, and politics. Dr. Charles Burney, the musicologist, who was among Hamilton's guests at the Villa Angelica on October 26, 1770, wrote:

"After dinner we had music and chat till supper. . . . As soon as it was dark our musical entertainment was mixed with the sight and observation of Mount Vesuvius, then very busy. Mr. H. has glasses of all sorts and every convenience of situation etc. for these observations with which he is much occupied. . . . The sight was very awful and beautiful, resembling in great the most ingenious and fine fireworks I ever saw. . . ."

Others, such as the artist Pietro Fabris and the English painter Joseph Wright of Derby, saw the eruptions in a more sublime light, but still linked, *tant soit peu,* with entertainment. Fabris's nocturnal paintings show the volcano in spectacular form, a manifestation of nature's terrible and irresistible power. *(Continued on page 196)*



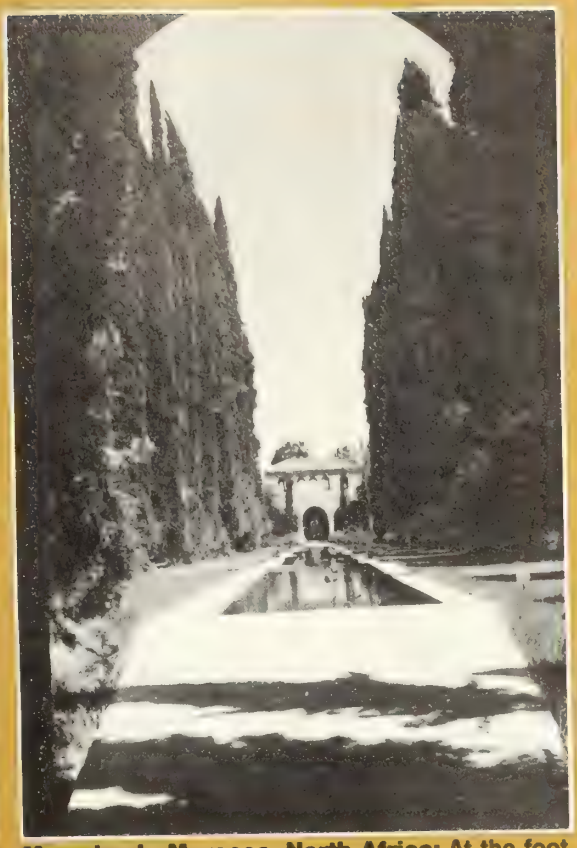
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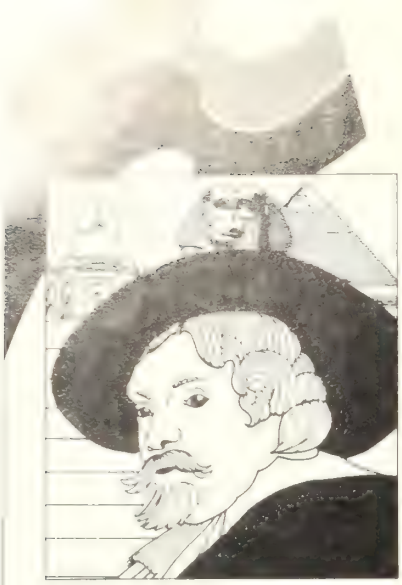
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(Continued from page 194) People are watching the eruption as if it were an alarming yet fantastic stage effect. One painting shows the spectators promenading along a convenient arched quayside while they watch; another shows the king of Naples accompanied by Hamilton himself, explaining and demonstrating to his royal guest the awe-inspiring yet comprehensible phenomenon.

While Hamilton was studying Vesuvius, and he, and his literary and artistic protégés, were establishing the volcano as a sublime, glorious, instructive, and entertaining phenomenon, a writer in England was, in theory at least, linking the volcano with the garden. Sir William Chambers (1723–96), in his *Dissertation on Oriental Gardening* of 1772 divides Chinese gardens into three categories, "the pleasing, the terrible, and the surprising." Among the scenes of terror the Chinese have "deep caverns in the rocks, and descents to subterranean habitations, overgrown with brushwood and brambles." Above these "deep caverns, to add both to the horror and sublimity of these scenes, they [the Chinese] sometimes conceal in cavities, on the summits of the highest mountains, founderies, lime-kilns, and glass-works which send forth large volumes of flame, and continued columns of thick smoke, that give to these mountains the appearance of volcanoes."

Chambers was acquainted with Edmund Burke, and by the 1770s would have known, seen, approved, or been amused by many of the grottoes that were being built as wild, subterranean adjuncts to English landscape gardens—including, for example, the "deep caverns" and "subterranean habitations" of Sir Francis Dashwood's Hell-Fire Caves at West Wycombe in Buckinghamshire (c. 1750), and the lakeside grottoes built for Charles Hamilton at Painshill in Surrey by Joseph Lane in the 1760s. While Dashwood's infernal labyrinth was carved in the solid chalk of the hill beneath the church of St. Lawrence, Hamilton's grotto-work was made from a holed and pockmarked tufa which looked so weather- and water-worn that it might be imagined to date from before the Flood. While Dashwood's caves suggested the flames of damnation, Hamilton's grottoes reminded the visitor of the Old Testament cataclysm. Discreetly, of course.

So far as I know, no English garden was given a volcano of the "Chinese" sort that Chambers describes. But one was built in Germany, and still survives. It is in the huge landscape park at Wörlitz, near the town of Dessau, now in East Germany. The best contemporary account of the park at Wörlitz is by Carl August Boettiger, *Reise nach Wörlitz 1797,* edited by Erhard Hirsch (Wörlitz, 1976).

In its origins and its component parts this volcano is directly descended from Hamilton and from Chambers. It was the creation of Fürst Leopold Friedrich Franz von Anhalt-Dessau (1740–1817), who traveled extensively in Europe before and during his long span of garden enthusiasm. He had been in England twice in the 1760s, made a fourth visit in 1785, knew Chambers personally, admired his work as an architect, and possessed his *Dissertation on Oriental Gardening,* which was translated into German in 1775. Fürst Franz had also traveled to Italy, visited Naples, was friendly with Hamilton, and had been an honored guest at the Villa Angelica; and he possessed Hamilton's writings on volcanoes.

The volcano he built was begun after 1788, and was more or less completed by 1790. Called Der Stein ("The Rock")—or Vulkankrater ("Vulcan's Crater")—it occupies an island some 300 yards in circumference, on a branch of the main lake, and its cone rises up prominently in the flat terrain to a height of about 80 feet. Perched on one side is a perfect replica of Hamilton's Villa Angelica. But it is not a natural hill carved or excavated to look like a volcano; it is entirely man-made, and hollow, so that it may "erupt" when the proper materials are ignited inside. Its volcanic effects were best observed at night, and were achieved in two ways—by sending out fire and smoke, as Chambers said the Chinese had done, and by pumping *water* over the lip of the cone, so that it flowed in a gleaming, cascading sheet down the outside and passed over red-tinted glass ports set in the side, which were illuminated from within. In this way, a reddish light gleamed through the tumbling water, making it look as if a stream of molten lava were pouring

down the flank of the volcano.

The Stein was a complex creation and incorporated lavish references to wonders of the ancient and the natural world. The approved way to approach the Stein was to come down the lake by boat. You would land at its foot in a cavelike recess—a grotto, adorned with fragments of basalt columns reminiscent of those in Fingal's Cave, discovered in 1772 by Joseph Banks on the island of Staffa in the Hebrides, and seen instantly as a relic of a volcanic convulsion in the earth's earliest days. In the wall of the grotto was a door—and, with some trepidation, you stepped inside the volcano.

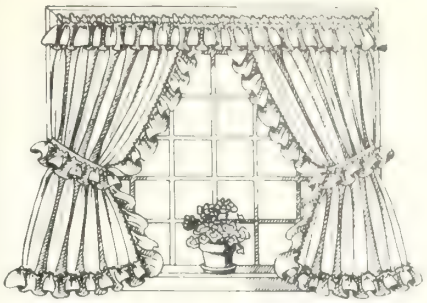
The most lively description of this strange, mainly underground visit is by Prince Charles de Ligne, who was there soon after the Stein was built. I translate from his French:

"As you jump from the boat, you plunge into caves, catacombs and scenes of horror, through fearsome darkness and stairways. You emerge for a breath of air, right into a fine Roman amphitheater. . . .

"And now new fears seize you—you wish to escape, and must, perforce, climb up a narrow stairway. The darkness becomes more complete . . . a sudden brightness dazzles your sight . . . a door opens; light gleams from a beautiful statue in the middle of a room, and you realize . . . that it has come through yellow, star-shaped panes in the roof of this chamber, and that an Etruscan entablature is set in the velvet blackness of the stones forming the walls. . . . You are still less than a third of the way through the tour. . . . A dwelling on another peak of this very rock. . . . It is a house which looks most simple and straightforward from the outside. Inside it is utterly magnificent, the whole of Herculaneum. . . ."

Remembering its "volcanic" setting, much of this underground visit recalls Chambers, whose *Dissertation* of 1772 suggests that Chinese gardens "sometimes" had "subterranean vaults, divided into apartments, where lamps, which yield a faint glimmering light, discover the pale images of ancient kings and heroes." Elsewhere, Chambers claims, there were "dark passages cut in the rocks, on the side of which are recesses, filled with colossal figures of dragons, infernal fiends, and other horrid forms." *(Continued on page 198)*

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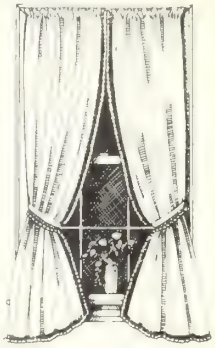
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(Continued from page 197) There is more in similar vein.

This interior of the Stein is also reminiscent of a passage from the Roman writer Spartian, referring to the Emperor Hadrian's vast garden at Tivoli, which contemporaries saw Fürst Franz as emulating. Hadrian had wished to re-create and commemorate famous scenes from all over the world—for example, the city of Canopus in Egypt, the Vale of Tempe in Greece, the portico of the Stoic philosophers in Athens—and, for completeness, "he even made a Hades"—*etiam inferos finxit* (*De vita Hadriani,* xxvi). Apparently the first "performance" of the Stein was in the presence of Frederick of Prussia—Frederick the Great—and the second, in July 1794, in the presence of the dukes of Weimar Meiningen, and of the poet Goethe, who was privy councillor to the Duke of Weimar. On this second occasion, "the Vesuvius spouted flames and destruction for the whole of three nights."

Two other much less solid and convincing volcanoes were set up in pleasure parks at the turn of the century. One was in the Ruggieri gardens at Tivoli, in the Parisian suburb of Clichy. Ruggieri was a specialist in firework displays, and in his gardens the volcano was just one among many spectacles and amusements devised to attract the public. An anonymous engraving of about 1796–1800 shows the incongruously assorted features at Tivoli—a windmill, an Egyptian obelisk, a Chinese kiosk, a Gothic tower, a Grecian temple, and, above all this, a hot-air balloon soaring into the sky. From behind the Gothic tower separate flames and smoke shoot up—this is a reminder of the volcano.

The Tivoli gardens declined rapidly after 1807. Such attractions did not last long, and it is likely that the construction of the "volcano" was not especially robust. This was also the case with the "volcano" set up in the Cascine pleasure gardens on the outskirts of Florence, which flourished in the last decades of the 18th century. Today the level site is mainly occupied by a racecourse, with no trace of a volcano.

In England, only one garden volcano was created, as far as I know. It was made by William Beckford (1760–1844), a man of immense wealth, in his garden domain of Fonthill, in Wiltshire. Beckford was to spend quite as much on Fonthill, on the gardens, grottoes, rides, plantations, and buildings, and, above all, on the abbey at their center, as did Fürst Franz on his park at Wörlitz; but though Beckford's abbey collapsed, the volcano in his gardens was conceived with a sureness of touch, which retained for it, at all times of day and in all seasons, something genuinely sublime. And this—to avoid suspense—was because his volcano was *extinct.* No "eruptions" occurred at Fonthill, even if the abbey tower did fall down in dust and fragments—twice. Beckford's extinct volcano did not and could not erupt, as it was conceived and created as a lake—Bitham, or Bittern, Lake.

Like Fürst Franz from Wörlitz, Beckford had visited Naples, and had stayed at the Villa Angelica on the slopes of Vesuvius. This was understandable, as he was related to Hamilton, whose first wife became a confidante, almost a second mother to him. His second visit to Italy, and to Naples, was made in 1782, and with him he took the artist John Robert Cozens (1752–97), who made many sketches and watercolors of the scenes they visited. Among these are a number of views, in the southern part of Italy, of lakes—Averno, Nemi, Albano—which had formed in the deep, tree-lined craters of extinct volcanoes and which had long been renowned for their associations with the fabled or historic past. While Cozens sketched these scenes, he, and Beckford, knew that they had often been admired and painted before. Cozens presented a restrained yet undeniable version of the sublime; and it is this effect which Beckford aimed at, and, I think, which he achieved with Bitham Lake at Fonthill.

He made the lake in the 1790s, damming up the water from a stream on the side of the wooded hillslope, at the top of which stood his huge Gothic creation, Fonthill Abbey—like the pope's palace above Lake Albano. The entir view was painted by Turner in 179 Another description of Bitham Lak in 1812, is likely to have given pleasu to Beckford, since its terms match h volcanic conception exactly:

"A fine pellucid lake reflects the su rounding beauties of the place; in som parts of unfathomable depth, and ha ing the appearance of the crater of a ancient volcano."

Fürst Leopold Friedrich Franz vo Anhalt-Dessau died in 1817, Willia Beckford left Fonthill in 1822. The garden volcanoes survive, the one Wörlitz immense, yet so complex an pretentious that it strains the credulit of a daytime visitor. The other, Fonthill, survives as a tranquil, rathe gloomy lake, shaded by the trees th rise up the slopes, toward the site Beckford's Gothic abbey. Only a sma part of Fonthill Abbey remains, bu Bitham Lake is still entire, and—if w know what we are meant to be lookin at—a creation in which we may be lieve.

By the beginning of the 19th centu ry, interest in the sublime aspects of na ture had progressed so far that it coul no longer be satisfied by artificial re creations within the confines of a ga den, however large or extravagant th garden might be. No more garden vo canoes were built. Instead, *real* volca noes are described, and romanti figures—the hero of Hölderlin's *Em pedokles,* or Chateaubriand's René– climb up the slopes of Vesuvius o Etna to brood over their ambitions their inadequacies, and uncertainties. cannot imagine René lost in *rêverie* perched on the lip of the Stein at Wör litz. Even if the romantic hero is defea ed by nature's unfeeling immensity nothing less than nature, wholly an genuinely sublime, can now b enough. □

Christopher Thacker teaches French li erature at the University of Reading England and is the author of The His tory of Gardens *(University of Califo nia Press) and* The Wildness Pleases The Origins of Romanticism *(St. Ma tin's Press).*

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